

Kentucky Marker Papers

Primary – Grade 8



**Kentucky Department
of Education**

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**Gene Wilhoit, Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Education**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.	iii
A Guide for the Kentucky Marker Papers, Grades P1 - 8	iv

PERSONAL WRITING

Personal Narrative - Primary Developmental Continuum	1
Personal Narrative - Beginning Skills	2
Beginning Writing	3
Personal Narrative - Developing Skills	10
Developing Writing	11
Personal Narrative - Competent (P4) Skills	19
Competent (P4) Writing	20
Personal Narrative - Grades 4 - 8 Skills	28
Grade 4	29
Grade 5	33
Grade 6	37
Grade 7	44
Grade 8	48
 Memoir - Primary Developmental Continuum	 53
Memoir - Beginning Skills.	54
Beginning Writing	55
Memoir - Developing Skills	62
Developing Writing	63
Memoir - Competent (P4) Skills	69
Competent (P4) Writing	70
Memoir - Grades 4 - 8 Skills	73
Grade 4	74
Grade 5	77
Grade 6	78
Grade 7	81
Grade 8	82

LITERARY WRITING

Short Story - Primary Developmental Continuum	85
Short Story - Beginning Skills	86
Beginning Writing	87
Short Story - Developing Skills	99
Developing Writing	100
Short Story - Competent (P4) Skills	113
Competent (P4) Writing	114
Short Story - Grades 4 - 8 Skills.	120
Grade 4	121
Grade 5	124
Grade 6	133
Grade 7	138
Grade 8	141

Poem - Grades 4 - 8 Skills	142
Grade 4	143
Grade 5	145
Grade 6	151
Grade 7	153
Grade 8	154

TRANSACTIONAL WRITING

Informational Writing - Primary Developmental Continuum	156
Informational Writing - Beginning Skills	157
Beginning Writing	158
Informational Writing - Developing Skills	163
Developing Writing	164
Informational Writing - Competent (P4) Skills	179
Competent (P4) Writing	180

Article - Grades 4 - 8 Skills	186
Grade 4	188
Grade 5	192
Grade 6	196
Grade 7	199
Grade 8	201

Persuasive Writing - Primary Developmental Continuum	202
Persuasive Writing - Beginning Skills	203
Beginning Writing	204
Persuasive Writing - Developing Skills	211
Developing Writing	212
Persuasive Writing - Competent (P4) Skills	218
Competent (P4) Writing	219

Letter - Grades 4 - 8 Skills	221
Grade 4	223
Grade 5	225
Grade 6	227
Grade 7	228
Grade 8	232

Editorial - Grades 4 - 8 Skills	235
Grade 4	237
Grade 5	238
Grade 6	239
Grade 7	240
Grade 8	244

Suggested Professional Resources	245
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Kentucky Department of Education

Linda Houghton,
Associate Commissioner of Office of Academic and Professional Development
Betty Edwards, *Director of Division of Curriculum Development*
Starr Lewis, *Manager of Humanities Branch*
Claudia Runge, *Writing Portfolio Consultant*
Julie Whitaker, *Writing Portfolio Consultant*

Marker Paper Project Coordinators

Ellen Lewis, *Writing Portfolio Specialist, Jefferson Co. Public Schools*
Julia (Tish) Wilson, *Region 3 Writing Consultant*

Marker Paper Project Committee

Sandy Adams, Rosenwald-Dunbar Elementary School, Jessamine Co.
Claire Batt, Fayette Co. Public Schools
Cindy Bradley, Whitney Young Elementary School, Jefferson Co.
Nancy Brandenburg, W. R. McNeill Elementary School, Bowling Green Independent
Joy Lynn Buckingham, Red Cross Elementary School, Barren Co.
Janet Burks, Dishman-McGinnis Elementary School, Bowling Green Independent
Lea Ann Crager, Argillite Elementary School, Greenup Co.
Margie Eckerle, Coleridge-Taylor Elementary School, Jefferson Co.
Robby Ewing, Goshen Elementary School, Oldham Co.
Kimberly Flener, Ohio Co. Middle School, Ohio Co.
Lisa Fowler, Nicholasville Elementary School, Jessamine Co.
Alonzo Fugate, LBJ Elementary School, Breathitt Co.
Kathy Godbey, Garrett Elementary School, Casey Co.
Joy Graham, W. R. McNeill Elementary School, Bowling Green Independent
Sandra Henry, Fairview High School, Fairview Independent
Johnene Ison, Adams Middle School, Floyd Co.
Kelly Jackson, Murray Middle School, Murray Independent
Jane Labadie, Allen Co. Primary Center, Allen Co.
Michelle Mazzei, Heath Middle School, McCracken Co.
Susan Miller, Primary Writing Consultant, Kentucky Dept. of Education
Carole Mullins, R. W. Combs Elementary School, Perry Co.
Carla Mulvaney, Huntertown Elementary School, Woodford Co.
Brenda Noble, Perry Co. Public Schools
Robin Osborne, Greenville Elementary School, Muhlenberg Co.
Brenda Philpott, Taylor Co. Elementary School, Taylor Co.
Carol Porta, JCPS Gheens Academy, Jefferson Co.
Patricia Sampson, Breckinridge-Franklin Elementary School, Jefferson Co.
Vicki Werner, Heath Middle School, McCracken Co.
Kim Wilson, Westport Middle School, Jefferson Co.
Shelli Wilson, Taylor Elementary School, Bracken Co.
Roxanne Wright, Crittenden Co. Elementary School, Crittenden Co.
Linda Young, Crawford Middle School, Fayette Co.

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A GUIDE FOR THE KENTUCKY MARKER PAPERS, GRADES P1 - 8

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

The marker papers provide answers to these questions:

- What is good writing supposed to look like at the grade level I teach?
- What lessons should I teach to enable my students to become proficient writers?

CONTENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT

- **Marker Papers**

The marker papers are examples of proficient student work at each grade level, P1 - 8. The papers illustrate the progression of key writing skills in specific types of writing. Each piece is annotated to show the skills which the writer has demonstrated in that piece of writing.

The primary markers include a number of pieces to show progress made throughout each year of the primary program. The Grades 4 - 8 markers represent end-of-the-year writing, the result of a year of effective instruction. For example, a year of effective instruction should move a fifth grade student who had been assessed as a proficient fourth grade writer to the level of the grade 5 marker by the end of fifth grade.

Students' names and identifying factors such as school, county, and city have been removed or, in some cases, changed to retain the flow of the piece.

These are not new benchmarks. The state benchmarks for writing at grades 4, 7, and 12 remain in place.

- **Primary Developmental Continuum for each type of writing**

A Primary Developmental Continuum appears at the beginning of each set of primary marker papers: personal narrative, memoir, short story, informational writing, and persuasive writing.

Using Kentucky's criteria for writing, the Primary Developmental Continuum shows the progression of skills which students should demonstrate as they move through the primary program. These are skills which are demonstrated in the writing, not student behaviors which a teacher can observe as a student writes.

Each continuum begins with skills of the beginning writer whose writing is scribbles. The continuum moves through those beginning skills to the skills evidenced by a developing writer. The continuum ends with a list of skills which competent writers should demonstrate by the end of P4. Competent primary writers are on track to become proficient writers at grade 4. Annotations for each marker paper match the skills listed in the continuum. **It is important to note that the Primary Developmental Continuum is not a new scoring guide for state accountability.**

- **Grades 4 - 8 skills list for each type of writing**

A skills list for writing appears at the beginning of each set of grades 4 - 8 writing: personal narrative, memoir, short story, poem, article, letter, editorial.

Using Kentucky's criteria for writing, the grades 4 - 8 skills lists describe skills specific to each type of writing included in this document. As students move from grade to grade, they demonstrate growth in the control and complexity with which they use these skills. Annotations on each piece relate to the skills on the list for the specific type of writing

These lists do not replace the Kentucky Holistic Scoring Guide for Writing.

- **Next Lessons**

The Next Lessons, which appear at the end of each marker paper, reinforce the idea that teachers use student work to make decisions about instructional priorities. The Next Lessons suggest one or more skills which the student writer needs to learn in order to continue progressing. Because the marker papers are finished pieces, the Next Lessons are not conferencing notes but instead guides for future instruction.

- **Suggested Professional Resources**

While the marker papers can help teachers to see what is expected of their students and to decide what they should be teaching, the marker papers cannot explain how to teach. The comprehensive list of resources at the end of the document provides effective teaching strategies.

USE OF THE DOCUMENT

In order to use these materials, you should:

1. Study the marker papers for a specific type of writing from beginning writing through grade 8. Read the annotations to notice how specific skills are demonstrated in each piece.
2. Locate the marker paper or papers which demonstrate the level of writing at which students at your grade level should be performing.
3. Read one of your student's pieces of writing to determine the skills which are evidenced in his/her writing.
4. Find the marker paper or papers which demonstrate a level of skills similar to those of your student.
5. Determine the next lessons to teach in order to enable the student to move toward the goal for his/her grade level.

NOTE: Schools are cautioned not to break up the materials into separate grade levels for distribution. Primary teachers need to have grade 4 and higher marker papers available to use as a measure for primary writers who are exceeding the proficient level for P4 students. Grades 4 - 8 teachers need to have primary materials available for use with students whose skills are below grade level.

PRIMARY DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUM

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Beginning



Developing



Competent (end of P4)

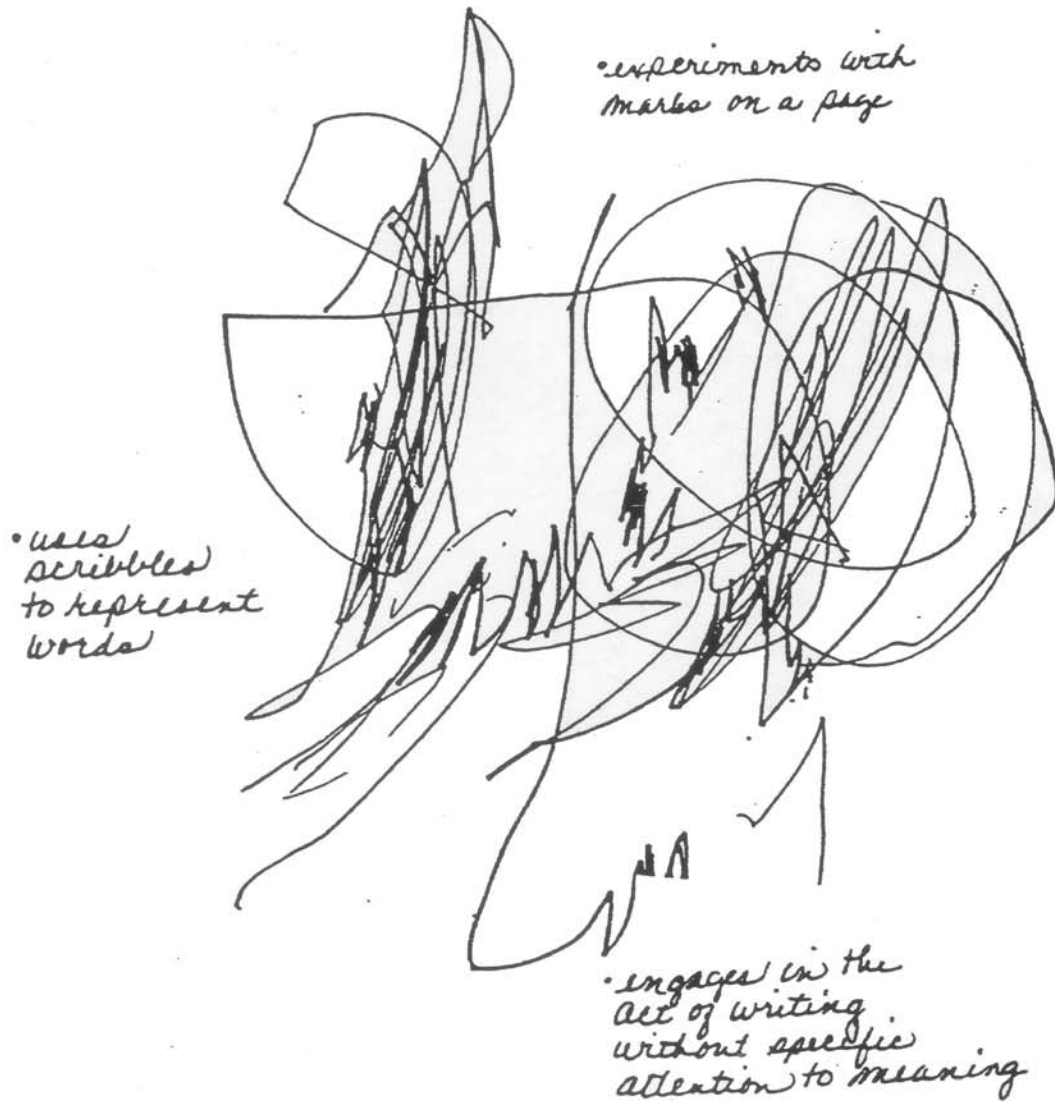
AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	Beginning	Developing	Competent (end of P4)
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/ SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> chooses topics from personal experiences engages in the act of writing without specific attention to meaning experimenting with marks on a page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> chooses topics from personal experiences begins to focus on a topic begins to express own feelings begins to show some evidence of individual voice begins to use titles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows awareness of reader's needs chooses topics from personal experiences narrow topic to the importance of one event in the writer's life focuses on the purpose of relating the importance of one event in the writer's life expresses own thoughts and feelings uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone creates a title that captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses drawings, symbols, letter-like marks to represent words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> begins to support ideas with simple phrases, one or two details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supports ideas with two or three relevant, specific details describes emotions, thoughts, and insights uses sensory detail and imagery uses dialogue when appropriate
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows some evidence of directionality (top to bottom, left to right) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates directionality attempts to demonstrate a story line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> places ideas and details in meaningful order writes an engaging lead writes an effective conclusion uses paragraphs uses some transition words and phrases
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> may use some letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence labels pictures or produces simple text using symbols or letter-like marks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence begins to write in first person uses word attempts or words to describe drawings uses a few sight words, especially those with particular meaning to the writer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> writes complete sentences uses a variety of sentence structures/ lengths writes in first person chooses language appropriate for the audience/purpose uses descriptive and figurative language makes few errors in usage uses a variety of words effectively
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lacks spacing may use scribbles, letter-like marks, letter reversals, and/or strings of random letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses some spacing between words uses one or two letters to represent a word; uses other inventions or approximations to represent words begins a sentence (copied or dictated) with a capital letter ends a sentence (copied or dictated) with punctuation begins to show sound/letter correspondence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes few errors in spelling makes few errors in capitalization makes few errors in punctuation makes few errors in correctness that do not interfere with the meaning

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

BEGINNING WRITING

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences • engages in the act of writing without specific attention to meaning • experiments with marks on a page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences • begins to focus on a topic
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses drawings, symbols, letter-like marks to represent words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to support ideas with drawings, symbols, one or two letters to represent a word
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows some evidence of directionality (top to bottom, left to right) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates directionality • attempts to demonstrate a story line
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may use some letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • labels pictures or produces simple text using symbols or letter-like marks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to write in first person • uses word attempts or words to describe drawings • uses a few sight words, especially those with particular meaning to the writer
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lacks spacing • may use scribbles, letter-like marks, letter reversals, and/or strings of random letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses some spacing between words • uses one or two letters to represent a word; uses other inventions or approximations to represent words • begins a sentence (copied or dictated) with a capital letter • ends a sentence (copied or dictated) with punctuation • begins to show sound/letter correspondence

BEGINNING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

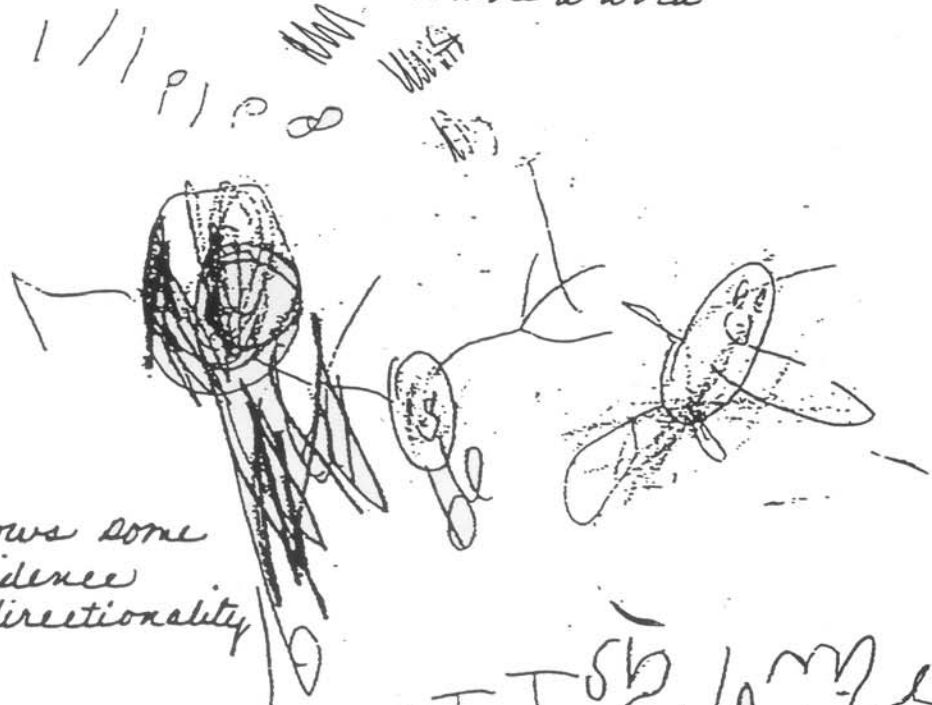


NEXT LESSONS:

- adding details to drawing
- using letter-like marks

BEGINNING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- begins to support ideas with drawings, symbols, and one or two letters to resemble a word



- shows some evidence of directionality

- uses letter-like marks, letter reversals, and strings of letters to resemble a sentence

NEXT LESSONS:

- using correct letter formation
- exploring how print looks

BEGINNING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

• chooses topics from personal experience



• demonstrates directionality

• uses known letters or approximations of letters to represent words and/or a sentence

hanebbif in is adt addeentee Com Pm Rm -

• lacks spacing

NEXT LESSONS:

- spacing
- recognizing the relationship between sounds and words

BEGINNING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topics from personal experiences and interests
- focuses on a topic



labels pictures

CT

- shows some evidence of directionality
- begins to show sound/letter correspondence
- uses word attempts to describe drawings

NEXT LESSONS:

- writing sentences
- developing a sight vocabulary

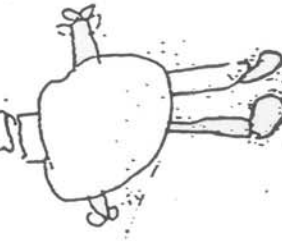
BEGINNING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

• chooses a topic from personal experiences and interests

• uses random letters

LLVM

• uses word attempts to describe a drawing



ILSOL

• demonstrates directionality

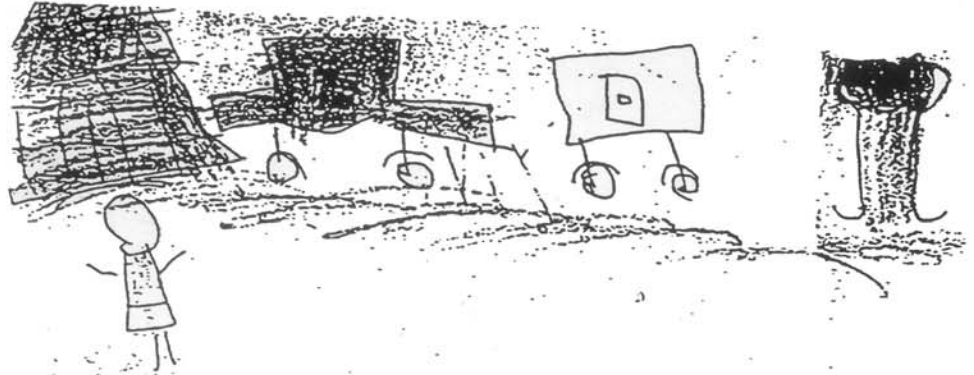
• begins to support ideas with drawings, symbols, one or two letters to represent words

NEXT LESSONS:

- guided writing
- recognizing sound/letter correspondence

BEGINNING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topics from personal experiences and interests



- demonstrates directionality
 - uses spacing between words
 - uses end punctuation
- I - M - G - i - t - e - V - r - b

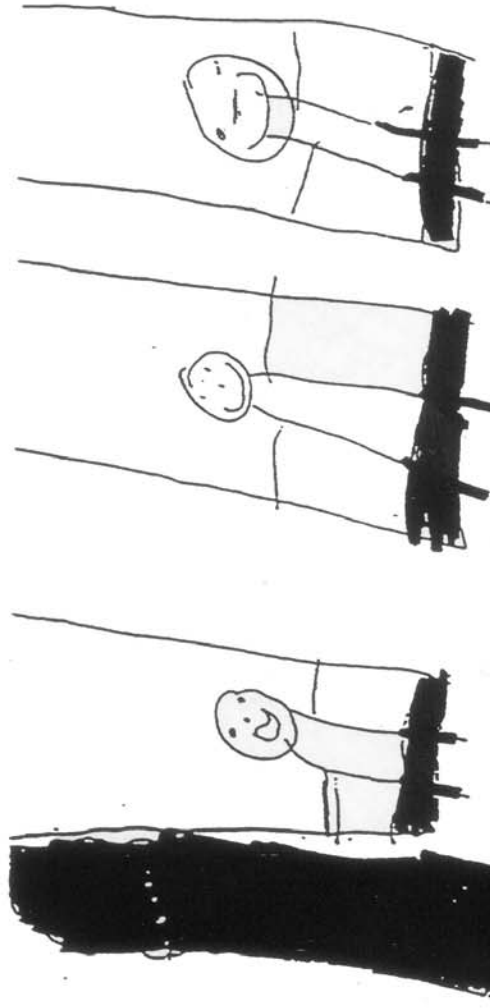
- uses word attempts to resemble a sentence
- begins to support ideas with drawings and one or two letters to represent words

NEXT LESSONS:

- recognizing sound/letter correspondence
- building sight vocabulary

BEGINNING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topic from personal experiences
- begins to focus on one event



• demonstrates an understanding of directionality

• uses a few sight words

When Thursday / I E L L O F. Th 'used some spacing

SWEET J.O

- uses words or word attempts to describe drawings
- begins to show sound/letter correspondence

NEXT LESSONS:

- developing a story line
- writing complete sentences

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

DEVELOPING WRITING

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences • begins to focus on one event • begins to express own feelings • begins to show some evidence of individual voice • begins to use titles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to show awareness of reader's needs • chooses topics from personal experiences • narrows topic to the importance of one event in the writer's life • focuses on the purpose of relating the importance of one event in the life of the writer • expresses own thoughts and feelings • uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone • uses title
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with pictures, simple phrases, one or two details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with one or two relevant, specific details • uses some description of emotions, thoughts, and insights • uses some sensory detail and imagery • attempts to use dialogue when appropriate
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates directionality • demonstrates some logical order • demonstrates a story line • writes a beginning (lead), middle (body), end (conclusion) • borrows structure from models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates logical order • attempts to develop an engaging lead • attempts to develop an effective conclusion • begins to use paragraphs • begins to use transitions
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes some simple sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes complete sentences • begins to use some variety in sentence structure/length
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes in first person • begins to use some descriptive language • shows some evidence of correct word usage (e.g., subject/verb agreement, correct use of "I" and "me") • begins to use a variety of words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes in first person • uses some descriptive and figurative language • demonstrates frequent, correct word usage (e.g., subject/verb agreement, correct use of "I" and "me") • uses a variety of words
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses spacing between words • uses sight words as well as inventions and approximations • begins sentence with capital letter • uses end punctuation • shows sound/letter correspondence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses more correct spelling, less invention and approximation • uses more correct capitalization • uses more correct end punctuation

DEVELOPING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topic from personal experiences
- focuses topic on one event
- writes in first person

• shows sound/letter correspondence

• begins sentences with a capital letter

• demonstrates directionality

• uses end punctuation

I want to my Cassin

• uses spacing between words

How's and I read my

bike.

• demonstrates logical order

• uses sight words as well as inventions and approximations

NEXT LESSONS:

- supporting ideas with details
- developing a story line

DEVELOPING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses a topic from personal experiences
- focuses on one event

• uses spacing between words

I Wet to
the Move
and I sol Baby
dill and To mee
and I was tied
to cri

• begins to
express
own
feelings

• shows sound/letter
correspondence

• demonstrates logical order

• demonstrates understanding
of directionality

• attempts to demonstrate
a story line

• uses sight words as well as
inventions and approximations

NEXT LESSONS:

- adding details
- writing simple sentences

DEVELOPING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses a topic from personal experiences
- writes in first person

I Sol mis Briat
at Post of / S hel / OS. ^{attempts to}
Riting Olet r She l w OS. ^{use punctuation}
Talked to my Cus / ns.

- demonstrates some logical order
- demonstrates an understanding of directionality
- uses sight words as well as inventions and approximations
- shows some sound / letter correspondence
- sometimes capitalizes first word in a sentence

NEXT LESSONS:

- developing a sequence of events
- using end punctuation

DEVELOPING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topics from personal experiences
- focuses on one event

One snowy day I
went out sid and I

• writes in
first person

• shows
some
evidence
of individual
voice

built a snowman.

• uses more
correct and
punctuation

(I had a great time)

• expresses
own
feelings

With my mom and Si.
We put a Catet

• attempts
to use
paragraphs

• writes complete sentences

- begins to show some evidence of individual voice
- demonstrates an understanding of directionality

• supports ideas with two or three relevant details

for the nos and buttons for
We put

• has a beginning, middle, and end

the Clos, good I
dres up and Mom and: Sis did
too. My Dad. Stad

• begins to use variety in sentence structure/length

• uses more correct spelling, less invention and approximation

inside and Watched
the Bollgam. The End

NEXT LESSONS:

- writing engaging leads
- using descriptive language

DEVELOPING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topic from personal experiences and interests
- focuses on one event in the life of the writer
- writes in first person
- uses more correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation

- attempts to develop an engaging lead

- uses a variety of sentence structures/lengths

- uses some descriptive language

- supports idea(s) with one or two relevant details

- uses transitions

- has a beginning, middle, and end

- writes complete sentences

Mom ~~gradually~~ dropped a glass plate and it spilled everywhere. Mom told me to get back but it was too late. I stepped in glass and mom got all the glass out. When mom got all the glass out she gave me ice-cream.

NEXT LESSONS:

- using descriptive language
- writing effective conclusions

DEVELOPING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topics from personal experiences
- stays focused on the topic
- has voice and expresses some emotion
- has a beginning, middle, and end
- logical order

• writes complete sentences

When I came home from school, I knew what to do! • attempts an engaging lead

I packed my bags and got ready to go to Disney World! So we took our bags and put them in the van. And then we started the van and we were gone! It took about one day to get there. We stayed in a hotel.

I had so much fun I couldn't believe it!

I went on a roller coaster!

After four days we left.

I didn't want to leave but I had to go home.

Then I packed my bags and we were home.

But the good part was I had fun!

• attempts to develop an effective conclusion

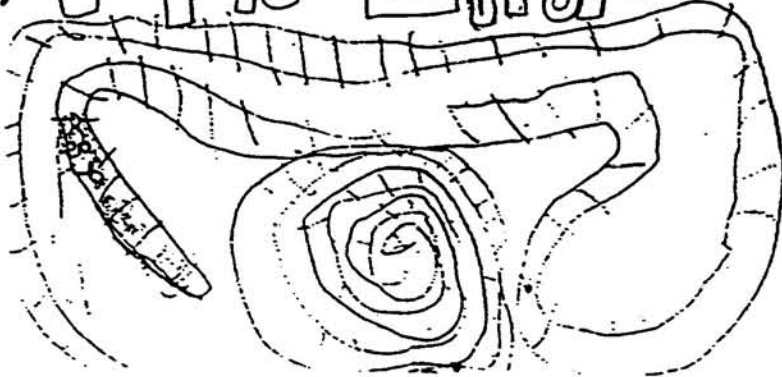
• expresses own thoughts and feelings

• begins to use some variety in sentence structures/lengths

• uses more correct spelling

• uses more correct end punctuation

The End!



NEXT LESSONS:

- narrowing topics
- focusing on a purpose

DEVELOPING - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- writes complete sentences
 - writes in first person
 - supports ideas with one or two relevant details
 - evidence of voice
 - attempts to relate the significance of the event
 - uses some description of emotions, thoughts
 - chooses a topic from personal experiences
 - stays focused on the topic
 - attempts an engaging lead
- I can remember the first time I spent the night with my friend, I was 5. She asked me if I wanted to so I thought about it, I knew it would be fun, but I had never spent the night with a friend. and I might miss my family. When we had to go to bed. Finally it was time to go I was a little worried, when I got there it was 6:30 so we ate pizza for dinner. Then we watched a movie, after that we played Candy Land. Soon it was time for bed, but for some reason I fell right to sleep without even thinking about missing my family. I had Fun!
- uses transitions
 - attempts paragraph structure
 - attempts to use a variety of sentences
 - uses more correct spelling
 - uses more correct capitalization
 - uses more correct end punctuation
 - begins to use a variety of words

NEXT LESSONS:

- developing details
- focusing on the significance of the event

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

COMPETENT (end of P4) WRITING

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows awareness of reader's needs • chooses topics from personal experiences • narrows topic to the importance of one event in the writer's life • focuses on the purpose of relating the importance of one event in the writer's life • expresses own thoughts and feelings • uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone • creates a title that captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/ SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with two or three relevant, specific details • describes emotions, thoughts, and insights • uses sensory details and imagery • uses dialogue when appropriate
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • places ideas and details in meaningful order • writes an engaging lead • writes an effective conclusion • uses paragraphs • uses some transition words and phrases
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes complete sentences • uses a variety of sentence structures/ lengths
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes in first person • chooses language appropriate for the audience/purpose • uses descriptive and figurative language • makes few errors in usage • uses a variety of words effectively
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes few errors in spelling • makes few errors in capitalization • makes few errors in punctuation • makes few errors in correctness that do not interfere with the meaning

COMPETENT (P4) - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topics from personal experiences and interests
- focuses on the significance of the event
- begins to show awareness of reader's needs
- writes in first person
- uses a variety of sentence structures/lengths

The Very Bad Day • uses a title
 Crack! The ball sailed center
 field but dropped before going
 over the fence. • creates an effective lead
 The center fielder got the ball
 and pegged it to second.
 I was looking to second
 but I stopped. I acted like I
 was going back to first and
 then headed to second because
 the second baseman threw the
 ball to first. The first baseman

- uses a variety of words
- uses descriptive language

- has a beginning, middle, and end
- supports ideas with one or two relevant details
- demonstrates logical order

throw to second. The second baseman caught the ball and tagged me. Out! I shouted. The umpire, I throw my arms up and I was going to shout at the umpire but I just watched away and, tank tank. I yanked my helmet off and went to the bag out. I hated that day.

• uses some description of emotions, thoughts

• correct word usage

• evidence of individual voice

• chosen language appropriate for audience and purpose

• uses more correct spelling, punctuation, and punctuation

NEXT LESSONS:

- using sensory detail
- using dialogue

COMPETENT (P4) - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topics from personal experiences
- narrows topic to the significance of one event in the life of the writer
- focuses on the purpose of relating the significance of the event
- creates an engaging lead
- expresses own thoughts and feelings
- supports ideas with relevant details
- uses sensory details

My First Spelling Test In My Life

I was in my classroom getting ready for my first spelling test. Everybody was sitting in their desk with a piece of paper in front of them. There was not a sound in the classroom.

I was so nervous, I was shaking and my knees were hitting and bouncing off from each other. Then all of a sudden my teacher called out a word. I heard my teacher say the word I really did but mostly all I could hear was my mind saying I'm so nervous, I'm so nervous.

Then I started to smell my sweat and my pencil started to slide out of my hand

- chooses language appropriate for audience and purpose
- writes in first person
- places ideas and details in meaningful order

• writes complete sentences

• uses a variety of sentence structures / lengths

• uses transitions

• uses paragraphs

I thought I saw my hand shaking like it was going crazy. Then I took my pencil and wrote down the word hoping I would get it right.

Then my teacher called out the word go and waited a min. or two. Right then I thought this isn't so bad. Next she called out another word and waited a min. or two. My teacher did the rest of the spelling test just like that.

When she was done with the spelling test she graded them. After she was done grading them she called out the people who made 100% and of a sudden she called out _____.

- describes thoughts and insights

I was so proud of myself. I stayed still for a min. and thought about something. I was thinking all that was wrong for nothing. I hope next time I will not be nervous.

- writes an effective conclusion

- has a few errors in correctness that do not interfere with meaning

NEXT LESSONS:

- using dialogue
- using correct sentence structure

COMPETENT (P4) - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- chooses topics from personal experiences
- narrows topic
- focuses on the purpose of relating the significance of the event

When I Was Cared

• creates a title

- writes in first person

Dad had just bought me a brand new bike for my birthday. I had turned 7 and my dad expected me to know how to ride

- uses two or three relevant details

my bike like a champ. I was so scared!

I had never ridden a bike before, but

I was still determined to try. So I got

on my bike and I did a dumb thing. First

- uses transitions

I forgot my gears. Second instead

of going on the ground I went down

- has a beginning, middle, and end

- places ideas and details in meaningful order

- writes complete sentences

a hill. I was doing fine until I took off.

I was heading straight for the best basket ball

goal. Dad forgot to show me where the

brakes were, and boom! I was knocked out.

Dad ran down to get me. He carried

me up the hill, and layed me on the truck.

- uses paragraphs

I was still unconscious. Mom

and Emily came running. I woke up

and put my hand on my forehead.

- uses dialogue appropriately

I said "Ouch." I took my hand

off my head. It had blood all over it.

I got sick.

- Has few errors in word usage
- uses a variety of words

- uses a variety of sentence structures/lengths

- F. Tom cleaned me up, and I looked in the mirror. I had a big spot on my forehead. I screamed! I tried to cover it with band-aids, but mom said it would take a while to cover it. I said "I don't want to go to school tomorrow."

- writes an effective conclusion

- She said "Good, It's Friday."

- has few errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation

NEXT LESSONS:

- writing engaging leads
- using descriptive language

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

GRADES 4 - 8

The writer of a proficient personal narrative demonstrates most or all of the following skills:

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE

- focuses on the purpose of relating the significance of one event in the life of the writer
- communicates the significance of the event to the reader
- narrows topic
- uses an individual voice
- creates a title which captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest

IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT

- develops ideas by using relevant supporting details from life experiences
- describes emotions, thoughts, and actions to relate the event
- develops the people in the narrative
- develops the action of the narrative
- uses dialogue effectively
- describes setting
- uses sensory details

ORGANIZATION

- writes an engaging lead
- places ideas and details in meaningful order
- organizes the narrative into paragraphs
- uses transitions between ideas
- maintains coherence and unity
- concludes the narrative effectively

SENTENCES

- writes complete and varied sentences

LANGUAGE

- chooses language appropriate to the audience and purpose
- writes in first person
- uses descriptive language
- maintains consistent verb tense
- makes subjects and verbs agree
- employs correct usage

CORRECTNESS

- spells correctly
- uses correct end punctuation, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes
- capitalizes correctly
- makes few errors in correctness which do not interfere with the meaning of the piece

As students move from grade to grade, they demonstrate growth in the control and complexity with which they use these skills.

Title captures essence of the piece.

GRADE 4 - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Writer focused on how storm affected his family.

Storm Damages

County"

Last summer my Mom was taking my sister, and me to our Mammy because she had to go with my other sister to a road block. They went so they would make money for the state tournament that I was going to play softball in.

Writes in first person

Writer provides information explaining why he was not home during storm.

Organizes in chronological order and in paragraphs

We drove in and everyone greeted each other with hugs, kisses, and talked awhile.

Transition

Soon Mom and I left and I rode our bikes on their gravel driveway. Then, I friends joined us.

uses dialogue to introduce conflict

I guess it was Dad who then called out, "You'd better go in because there was just a severe thunderstorm warning for the whole tri-state, in effect until 8:00 tonight." So we parked our bikes and ran back inside. I ran a long way to get to his house. I was enough. As soon as we walked inside, it started storming. Every minute it got worse. There weren't

Transition

Transition

Sensory
details
develop the
incident.

just flashes of lightning, there were big long streaks of lightning followed by loud booms of thunder. I was screaming bloody murder! The whole family was about to panic! "Is it almost over?" I asked, still scared to death!

Sentence
Variety

I replied back to her, "Yes, but you have to be quiet and quit screaming." Unfortunately, the storm still got worse.

Transition

So Mamma took us downstairs to the basement to try to calm us down.

I may Aunt, who is in a wheelchair was a little frightened, but wasn't able to go downstairs with us.

Sensory
detail
develops
the incident.

While I let out one more scream we heard a loud thud. It didn't sound normal even though we could still hear the wind real strong. So

Transition

Mamma went upstairs to see what that loud thud was. We could hear her call out, "Oh, great! There's a tree on the patio." I tried to go up and see what had happened, but I wouldn't let me, so I stayed down with her because she looked too scared.

Transition

Dialogue
introduces
details.

transition Suddenly we remembered... Mom!
She and I are still at the road block!

connects to
lead; shows
thoughts of
writer

transition Then all of a sudden... the storm
began to let up and everyone let out
a loud sigh. Whhhheeww!!!

descriptive
language

transition Soon we got a phone call from one
of Mom's and Mamma's friend saying,
"there's a tree on G. I house and
power lines are down, and thankfully, their
not home."

Details
recreate
aftermath
of storm.

transition Next Dad called to make sure that
everyone was O.K. Fortunately, we were
all fine, even I

The writer
ties up
loose
ends
about aunt
and the
people
at the
road block

Soon Mom picked us up, went
home, and checked out all the damage
to our house and to our neighbors
houses. We never heard of any other
counties, just

transition That night Mom, I and I stayed
up with a candle lit because the power
was off. We could see who could name
the most birds, fruits, and other things.
(Anything to keep our minds busy)

details
of the
aftermath

transition Soon the power was back on and
everyone lived through that horrible

- effective conclusion - relates to purpose

storm. Fortunately and thankfully, no one was hurt.

- few errors in usage and correctness

NEXT LESSONS:

- expanding the climactic scene
- using strong verbs

GRADE 5 - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

A KNOCK AT THE KNOX

Play on words creates
an engaging title.

narrows topic;
focuses on one
event

Writes in first person
uses chronological order

"Hey guys... are you ready to see some authentic war tanks?!?!??" Uncle Victor yelled.

Dialogue
creates
engaging
lead.

Victor worked in the Navy and he wanted to show Ryan and me some army tanks!

Detail connects to conclusion.

transition

As we were walking through the museum, we saw this old, beat up tank. It looked like "Rocky" after a bad fight. We stopped to ask somebody that worked at Fort Knox if they had any tanks that you could climb on.

descriptive
language

He replied, "Yes, we do. They're right outside those doors," as he pointed to a pair of steel doors. "But whatever you do, DON'T HIT YOUR HEAD ON THE TANKS!"

foreshadows
event

descriptive
language

I was so happy I sprinted over to the doors like a starving lion after its fallen prey. It was a blistering hot day and the grass was scorched!! We headed to the first tank.

descriptive
language

Victor said, "I want a picture of you and Ryan on the front of the tank." Ryan climbed up to the front of the tank as adept as a mountain goat up a rocky cliff. I scrambled onto the back of the tank and raised up very abruptly and to my surprise there was an overhang of metal. "Ow!!" I blurted. "What in the world did I hit?"

uses dialogue
to introduce
main point
of narrative

sentence
variety

Victor came rushing over to see what was the matter. He found me hunched over with my hand to my head, and blood was oozing between my fingers. Victor ripped his shirt off and strong wrapped it around my head. Then he picked me up and rushed me to his truck.

strong
verbs

As Victor sat me down on the seat, I felt like I was going to pass out. My head was spinning, and my arms and legs felt like rubber. As if he didn't know I felt bad enough already, he announced, "We've got to take you to the emergency room."

sensory
details

I shouted, "EMERGENCY ROOM!?!?!"

He calmly answered, "Yes."

uses dialogue
and action
to develop
character

uses an
individual
voice

I was ready to cry, but crying would only make matters worse. Victor knew how upset I was, so he started cracking jokes like, "I think I see your brains about to fall out."

connects to
conclusion

transition

Punctuation
and all
caps indicate
writer's
reaction to
the idea
of stitches.

When we arrived at the emergency room, Victor quickly told the nurse, "This boy cracked his head open!" They led us to a room, where my mom joined us. The nurse had my mom hold numbing medicine on my head, because they decided that I would have to get.....STITCHES!!!! My knees were shaking when they finished the last stitch. I was relieved to be done with this awful procedure!

sensory
detail

transition

Two weeks later we went over to Victor's house to eat dinner. After we were finished eating Victor went upstairs and brought down a little box. He gave it to me and I opened it. It was my grandpa's "Red Badge Of Courage," that he received from the Navy. Grandpa passed it down to Victor, and Victor passed it down to me. Victor told me he wanted me to have it for being so brave and not crying when I hit my head. I was so proud and honored to receive my grandpa's medal. I felt like I was glowing in the spotlight!

Conclusion
indicates
significance
of event.

descriptive
language

few errors
in usage
and correctness

NEXT LESSONS:

- using an interior monologue to convey the writer's thoughts
- consistent, correct use of commas in compound and complex sentences

GRADE 5 - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Written in first person
uses chronological order

My Best

Little captures
significance
of event.

Narrows topic;
focuses on
one incident

Varied
sentence
structure

descriptive
language

engaging
lead

Sensory
detail

character
development

"And in lane #4 Team One's, Jane Doe !" The announcer exclaimed over the intercom, which was way too close to the pool, and I thought was going to fall in! I was at South Central (a regional competition). I stepped onto the first step of the swimming block and felt a huge drop of sweat drip off my nose. I posed, as if I had bulging muscles, to turn the ever lasting stares into laughs. The crowd did as I wished and burst out into a million chuckles. I let out a sigh of relief and peered over at my mother to see her reaction to my pose.

She was standing as close as she could get to the pool, almost on top of the gate. She gave me an enormous smile that seemed to say "just do your best."

In lane six the last name was being announced, and then the announcer got a serious look on his face.

"Swimmers step onto the block!" he demanded pointing at the swimmers (including me). I felt like diving in right then, I was so excited, and hot! "Take your marks," echoed the announcer.

I bent to touch my orange toe nails as the wings of the butterflies in my stomach got larger and larger, until I felt like I was going to pop.

"Beeeeep!" the buzzer screeched informing the swimmers to dive in. Along with the other swimmers, I dove in. My fingertips reached the freezing water and I heard a million

Strong
verbs

descriptive
language

Strong verbs help to develop the incident

screams, cheering the representatives of their teams on. The rest of my body hit the pool water, immediately my arms began stroking and my legs began kicking. Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed two girls ahead of me. I tried a little harder to go faster. I tried so hard I began to cry under the water.

Sensory details develop the action of the narrative.

I plunged off the concrete wall to start my second length. Now I saw three girls in front. I knew I couldn't push myself any harder and seemed to slow down a bit. The yells got louder and multiplied the closer I got to the wall.

transition

I slammed my falsin-like hands on the black touch pad, and attempted to stand up but was too weak. The timer pulled me out of the water and told me that I had done well.

transition

I found out later that I had gotten fourth place. Even though I didn't get first place, and had worked really hard and done my best, I was very proud of my new medal and especially me! Pushing yourself to the limit makes your heart feel happier than getting the top medal. Doing your best is one of the most wonderful feelings in the world!

The writer reflects on the significance of the event.

The writer transitions from one paragraph to the next by connecting ideas and objects.

few errors in correctness

NEXT LESSON:

- varying sentence beginnings (See overuse of "I" to begin sentences on second page.)

GRADE 6 - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

writes in first person
focuses on one incident
uses chronological order

Varied
Sentence
Structure

A huge "fad" in my neighborhood last year was jumping on this kid's trampoline. It was very fun. *engaging lead*

The kid who owned this "tramp" (the now common name *anticipates reader's need to have term explained* for trampoline) was kind of a "geek" because he was

unathletic. But once he got this tramp, many of the very popular kids in the neighborhood began to flock *descriptive language* to the kid's house to jump, for they were allowed.

I, being one of the popular kids in the neighborhood, *sets up conflict at the beginning* felt more and more pressure put on me to hop on and have some fun. But one imovable pothole lied in my road to trampoline fun and games this summer. My *descriptive language*

mother.

transition

Yes, my mother. She's very overprotectant to my brother and I. You see she works at Children's Hospital. There have been many days when she's come home talking about kids she sees at work who have fallen off tramps, or bikes and have been paralyzed terribly. *Details explain mother's side of conflict*

transition

So one day when she was in a very happy and loving mood, (I'd been waiting for one of these days to ask her all of my questions which involved "pretty please?") I walked up to her, and speaking in my nicest voice asked, "Hey, Mom could I by any chance jump on the tramp with the other kids?" So it began. (a long lecture) For over 15 minutes she explained to my crumbling body in heartbreaking

uses individual voice
descriptive language

detail, why I could not. After tossing in a few what
if's, but's and please's my defeated plea ended. *descriptive language*

effective use of interior monologue

How could I possibly tell my friends this? Or would I? So now I would be the odd man out. So much *continues focus set forth in lead*
for my popularity!

transition One lonely day after school, I decided to ride

my bike down to the tramp to see if my friends were down there. Sure enough there they were, jumping and

having so much fun. As I stood by the side of the tramp in envy, we talked about our day. After a *sensory detail*

while, my closest friend of the bunch urged me to get on unaware that I wasn't allowed. As the compulsion *descriptive language*

maintains focus

built up inside me I knew I could not lose my popularity, so without thinking I hopped on and began jumping.

transition

It felt so good! As my friends and I talked I began to realize what would happen if my mom caught me jumping. But after a while of having so much fun I forgot all about it.

You know, this really was like poison ivy.

reflection and insight

Although someone tells you not to itch it, and you know your not suppose to, but it itches like crazy. Then once you itch it you feel terribly guilty but you keep itching and can't stop. The your trouble only spreads.(like mine would)

effective use of metaphor

transition As I was jumping, I felt more and more guilty but kept jumping. The tramp was behind the kid's

Sentence
Variety

house so I kept eyeing the corner of the house *descriptive language*
nervously, expecting my mom to come walking around
and catching me. Then, after about five more
minutes, my mom came walking around that corner. A
disappointed frown crossed her face. As I jumped off
the tramp in fright and unexpectation of what would
be said next, I spoke to my friends quickly, "Uh, uh,
I'm really late for ball practice." "You're in for *Dialogue captures personalities of speakers.*
it, young man!" I heard my mom say. Oh great! I
thought.

After a vigorous fine of \$10, and one whole week
of being grounded, I figured that without a doubt I
acted before thinking. My actions would definitely
be different today for this certainly taught me a
lesson. As it turns out, my friends don't really
care after all.

*concludes
by reflecting
on significance
of event*

*Returns to the idea
of maintaining
popularity*

NEXT LESSONS:

- using precise words
- creating an effective title
- punctuating parenthetical ideas
- using spellcheck

GRADE 6 - PERSONAL NARRATIVE



focuses on the significance of one incident

Hangin' With the Big Dogs

Humor and irony create the writer's individual voice.

Catchy title captures the essence of the piece.

writes in first person

I'm sure when you were a kid, you wanted to act older. Last year I tried to act older too. The problem with that is I was trying to run with the big dogs, but this pup learned a hard lesson that fateful day.

addresses reader

descriptive language

See, my Dad's work, M . County Coal, holds an annual golf tournament every year at P Country Club.

Well, last September I entered that tournament with my Dad and two of his buddies. I tried to prove that I was a golf prodigy, considering I out drove all the little guys at the driving range, I thought I was a golf prodigy.

appropriate language use

I was so sure that I could see that weird lookin' man on top of a golf trophy sitting up on my shelf, I already had a place picked out for it.

details develop the idea of the writer's overconfidence.

On the tee off area there lay an off white tee and a logoed golf ball on top of it.

The guys whispering off to the side made me nervous, were they talking about me or were they talking about the shovel (piece of machinery) that was down at work? I was convinced that if they weren't talking about me, they were probably thinking about me, they were probably thinking that they had better not get beat by an eleven year old.

Writer's thoughts continue to show his overestimation of his golf talent.

Varied Sentences Nervous and worried, I got in my pro form stance, legs shoulder length apart and arms fully extended. I suddenly connected with the ball." It's going, going, going, gone and where it went, nobody knows. I looked everywhere but no ball.

Details create image for the reader

transition As of right now, not to many things are going my way. The only good thing is looking forward to getting to the cart and finishing my peanuts and pop, and driving the cart to the next hole.

disputes the notion that driving the cart will be a good thing (transition)

Recovering from a near golf cart flip in which I turned a curve way too sharp and came up on two wheels, I got a hole in one on the second hole, if you call a big, fat, stupid pond a hole. I threw my golf club in my bag angrily, waiting for the next hole to come up.

Clever language use

transition On the third hole I actually got the ball in the hole, after about twenty shots. At this point in time, I knew I wasn't exactly getting warmed up. The space on my shelf, it might have to sit empty for awhile longer.

recalls earlier details

transition Things went that way to about the sixteenth hole. That one was the only hole I hit the ball past one-hundred yards, except for the first one and I don't want to get in to that again.

The next time I hit the white ball, it glided in the air like an eagle. All of the sudden a man came out of nowhere and got under my ball, right where the shadow of my ball was. *descriptive language*

I yelled.

"44444444444444!!!!"

The man covered his head like a helpless child. With a lot of luck, the ball landed about two feet from the man's head. *descriptive language*

I later found out that the near candidate for brain surgery didn't come out of nowhere, he was there the whole time, I just didn't see him. *clever language*
effective use of humor

irony If you ignored the almost ambulance call, the shot was perfect.

"Hole eighteen's gonna be the best" I said with a whole lot of self-confidence. *transition*

On hole eighteen you have to hit the ball over a two-hundred and ten feet river bed.

I took my back swing and "POW!!" as the titanium hit the ball all I could hear as I closed my eyes were the *descriptive language*

"Ooohs" and

"Aaahs".

Pleading in my head, I told Dad, "It might make it."

"CRACK!!!!"

descriptive language The ball hit a tree and ricochets into the dried up river bed.

"Well, it ain't like it ruined your score." Dad said trying to be humorous, but I didn't think it was a bit funny.

Use of onomatopoeia creates the sound of the scene.

transition When we got back to the clubhouse I was congratulated for being the youngest player by my Uncle R , the tournament host, also an employee at M County Coal.

Well, I have to say it was a good experience, an embarrassing experience, but a good one.

Next time, I'll not hang with the big dogs, I'll just wait on the porch for them to come home!

*Clever language
ties to lead
and title.*

few errors in correctness

NEXT LESSONS:

- cutting out unnecessary text
- using consistent verb tense

GRADE 7 - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Little captures the essence of the piece and establishes focus.

"Learning to Drive"

Narrows topic to one event

organized chronologically

engaging lead

"Oooooahhhhhh," I yawned sleepily. "Mom, it's too early to get up."

"No, it's not, Honey. You have to get up and get ready for school."

writes in first person

I got out of bed and trudged downstairs to begin preparation for school. I was six years old at the time, and my brother, Brennan, was four. When I came back down, I was grouchy for no apparent reason.

descriptive language

establishes characters

through descriptions and dialogue

"How come we gotta go to school all the time," I questioned. "So that you can learn and get a good job when you grow up."

Dialogue captures natural speech patterns.

"But I don't like it," I complained stubbornly.

descriptive language

"That's just part of life, R____. Now go brush your teeth and I'll be in there in a minute to comb your hair."

I did as I was told. B____ was also in the bathroom brushing his teeth.

Correct punctuation of dialogue

"Do you like going to school, B____?" I asked.

"Yeah," he said, "It's fun!"

"Well, I sure don't."

Mom combed our hair, and we were ready to go to school.

Dialogue
provides
transition
from first
scene to
the next

"Come on boys, we are going to be late," yelled Mom from the kitchen.

"Wait a second," I yelled back for no particular reason.

"No, come right now," she demanded.

"We're coming, we're coming."

We grabbed our lunches and headed outside and down the stairs to the dark-green Volvo. It was a rather brisk day, so I wore a jacket.

supplies relevant
setting details
needed for
reader to
understand
plot

To understand this story, you have to be able to visualize my driveway. It started out going perpendicular to the road towards the backyard at a slant. Then, it went left and then left again into the garage. From up above, this probably looked something like a squared-off U.

descriptive
language

correct
paragraphing

For some reason, that day the car was parked at the end of the straight part of the driveway facing the yard. The yard continued at a downward slant until the point where our woods began.

sentence
variety

develops
the action
of the
narrative

The three of us loaded into car. Mom turned it on, and we started to pull out of the driveway. Just as we entered the road, Mom said, "OOPS. I forgot my purse. I must have left it in my bedroom."

We pulled back down the driveway and Mom went inside to get her purse. B_____ and I were left alone in the car. Out of curiosity, we both climbed into the front seat.

sentence variety

"Hey, W_____, what's dat stick?" asked B_____. What he was referring to as a stick was really the gear shifter.

the earlier dialogue and description establish R as the kind of person who would say this, thus causing the event to happen.

"I don't know, but I dare you to push on it."

So, with my encouragement, B_____ pushed the stick. You can probably guess what happened next. We began to roll down

conversational voice

our backyard. B_____ had knocked the car out of gear and there was just enough of an angle for the car to roll. B_____ stuck his head out the window and was now screaming. I was so frightened I couldn't even move.

describes emotions, thoughts, actions to relate the event

CRUNCH! we both heard. It was the sound of my bike being smashed like an ant under the wheels of the car. We were rolling at a speed less than ten miles per hour, but it was enough to scare two young boys half to death. The car hit a tree, and we stopped with a loud thud.

specific, sensory details

Neither of us were injured, and the car just had a few scratches. My bike had been totally demolished, though. Mom came running up behind us and cried "Oh my gosh, boys, are you all right?"

correct paragraphing

descriptive language

"Yeah," we replied with panic-stricken voices.

Transition

In the end, I got a new bike which was better than the one before, so I was happy. We were late for school, but my mom took care of it. Also, B_____ and I were denied the privilege of entering a vehicle without an adult accompanying us, but we were not too upset.

*concludes
effectively*

I learned the hard way that I should not touch or bother anything that I am not fully familiar with. B_____ learned not to listen to everything I tell him to do, and Mom learned not to leave two young boys alone in a car.

*reflects on
significance
of event*

few errors in correctness

NEXT LESSON:

- using dialogue and interior monologue to develop the climax

GRADE 8 - PERSONAL NARRATIVE

double meaning
of the title:
the ride and
the rider

The Extreme Sky Flier

narrows topic to
one ride at
King's Island
focuses on the
significance of
overcoming fear

engaging
lead

Imagine yourself slowly being raised 175 feet into the air. Every foot you go to reach the destination the ground keeps getting smaller and smaller.

People start looking like ants and your heart is racing.

sensory details

Sounds scary! But actually it's not, it's really, absolutely the most fun thing I've ever done.

writes in
first person

It all started a week before school, my family and I went to Cincinnati, to the Kings Island amusement park. My sister and I were walking around riding all of the roller coasters because I've never ridden a

uses

chronological
order

roller coaster before... But that's a different story.

maintains focus

Never the less we were walking around and we saw this awesome ride called the "Extreme Sky Flier". It looked really cool, but I was afraid to ride it. My sister kept on bugging me every time we walked past the tall arched ride with a string right down the middle.

establishes
character

descriptive
language

"Kristi", Melissa, my sister said, "ride that awesome ride, it's not going to kill you, we are just going to be raised up 175 feet and then dropped, that's all."

Dialogue
captures
voices of
the speakers.

"Yeah that's all!" I thought.

I'm really afraid of heights. One time we were walking on a bridge about 50 feet high and I about had a heart attack. I didn't even want to think about 175ft. That's a little over three times as high. I told myself there was no way I was going to do that. It makes me shiver when I think about it.

establishes
character
and
conflict
of the
narrative

Well, about an hour later we ran into my dad who was with my brother Shane.

Melissa said, "Dad will you and *Kristi* ride the 'Extreme Sky Flier' with me?" I guess she directed that towards me, just to butter me up. Because when dad says yes there's hardly any arguing.

Dad thought for a while, "What's the cost?", he asked.

"About \$15 each."

"Well, okay", replied dad.

Transition (The next thing I knew) I was being (dragged) to the ticket line, which was actually very short, probably because not many people are as crazy as us. *Descriptive language develops the action.*

Transition (Then before I could say anything) about what I thought about the situation dad had already paid.

"Be back in 10 minutes", said the lady in the booth.

I thought to myself, "Great now I can't chicken out of this. I'm already paid for. Nobody else in our family would even think about riding that (death defying) ride." *reveals thoughts*

descriptive language I slowly followed my sister and dad over to mom who was hearing about what we were doing.

My mom about died as well as myself. 10 minutes was up and we were heading for the ride. My anticipation rose about what was getting ready to happen. The ride's scariness got my heart racing. The closer I got the faster my heart beat. *sensory details*

Transition (When we reached the ride) the instructors helped us into our suits. They were kind of weird, like a parasailing suit of some sort. Mine was purple. I don't quite remember the color of my sister's and dad's suit. I do remember thinking to myself, "Why am I risking my life for a ride!" *reveals thoughts*

transition

The next thing I remember it was our turn and we were on the stand.

The instructors put me, my dad, and my sister in line, vertically, with me in the middle.

"Lock arms", said the guy who was getting us ready. I don't remember what he looked like. I really didn't care at the time, all I cared about was me living through this. "Now don't hold on to us, okay you're going to feel a little jerk."

reveals
thoughts

BOOM! We were hanging from a string. It was kind of weird and hurt a little bit.

develops
action

The guy started again, "Now don't unlock arms until you fly over this box one time! Every one understand?" we all shook our heads yes, "Now who is going to pull the rip cord?"

dialogue
advances
the action.

"I am", said my dad.

"Okay, when I give you thumbs up you pull it", said the guy, "Everything understood?"

We all agreed yes.

The guy checked us out one last time, just to be sure and said, "All right here you go! Watch for my thumbs up."

I heard a noise, I guess it was the machine starting the raising. I was right, up we began. At first it wasn't sooo... bad, but the higher we got the faster my heart beat rose and my fear along with it.

My dad looked at me and my sister and asked, " Why are we doing something this crazy?"

continues
to stay
focused
on her
fear

I couldn't talk, my heart was so far up my throat.

My dad asked if we wanted him to tell us before he pulled the rip cord or just do it. We both replied immediately, "Just do it."

transition Every foot higher we got the ground seemed to be sooo... far away and people looked like tiny ants wondering around. I could see the whole park. The scenery was pretty. Then I remembered it wouldn't be that pretty when it comes rushing towards me quickly. *Connects to lead*

transition Then with no other thought we stopped. I promise my heart started beating about a 1,000 times a minute. I could taste my bitter fear. *effective sentence structure* *sensory detail*

I looked at my dad hoping I wouldn't see what he was about to do, but that wasn't going to happen. I watched in fear as his hand slowly made its way to the rip cord inch by inch. He placed his hand on the rip cord and he slowly pulled it. *Detailed build up the action.*

Varied sentence lengths enhance the action. Silence. My heart stopped. I heard nothing. All I can remember feeling is an unexplainable SWOOSH as we rushed quickly 150 feet towards the green ground. I felt as if I was going to die. And right when I thought my life was going end... we swung up over everybody and back over the box. Without even knowing my screaming turned to laughter. I was having fun. We swung back and forth. "I'm flying", I thought. My sister and dad were laughing too. *surprised reader with her reaction*

I unlocked my arms with my dad and sister and stretched them out. The wind was blowing in my face and I was having a great time.

We swung several more times back and forth, then we had to grab a loop with a string on it to stop us. We grabbed the string and stopped directly over the box. They got us to stand up again. Then the instructors unhooked us and let us go. We were helped out of our suits and released.

We ran to tell my mom how much fun we had.

transition As my sister and dad were telling my mom how fun the ride was, I was thinking, "That was the most awesome, fun, greatest thing I have ever *reveals thoughts*

done. Why was I so afraid?" I cleared my thoughts and started talking to my mom.

" Was it fun? ", my mom asked.

" Yes!!!" , I said literally screaming, " it was the best."

My sister looked at me and said, " Aren't you glad you experienced the ' Extreme Sky Flier' ?"

" Yes ", I screamed, " if I didn't ride that ride I would be miserable with regret for the rest of the week."

On our way to the next ride I thought , " Fear doesn't accomplish anything."

*reflects on the
significance
of the event*

few errors in correctness

NEXT LESSONS:

- creating an effective conclusion
- punctuating dialogue

PRIMARY DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUM

MEMOIR

Beginning



Developing



Competent (end of P4)

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	Beginning	Developing	Competent (end of P4)
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences • engages in the act of writing without specific attention to meaning • experiments with marks on a page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences • begins to focus on a topic (person, place, animal, or thing) • begins to express own feelings • begins to show some evidence of individual voice • begins to use titles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows awareness of reader's needs • chooses topic from personal experiences • narrows topic to the importance of the relationship between the writer and the person, place, animal, or thing • focuses on the purpose of relating the importance of the relationship between the writer and the person, place, animal, or thing • expresses own thoughts and feelings • uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone • creates a title that captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses drawings, symbols, and letter-like marks to represent words • shows some evidence of directionality (top to bottom, left to right) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with pictures, simple phrases, one or two details • demonstrates directionality • demonstrates some logical order • writes a beginning (lead), middle (body), and conclusion (ending) • borrows structure from models • writes some simple sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with two or three relevant, specific details • describes emotions, thoughts, and insights • uses sensory details and imagery • uses dialogue when appropriate • demonstrates logical order • attempts to develop an engaging lead • attempts to develop an effective conclusion • begins to use paragraphs • begins to use transitions
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may use some letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence • labels pictures or produces simple text using symbols, letter-like marks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence • uses word attempts or words to describe drawings • writes a few sight words, especially those with particular meaning to the writer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • places ideas and details in meaningful order • writes an engaging lead • writes an effective conclusion • uses paragraphs • uses some transition words and phrases • writes complete sentences • uses a variety of sentence structures/lengths
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lacks spacing • may use scribbles, symbols, letter-like marks, letter reversals, and/or strings of random letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to use some descriptive language • shows some evidence of correct word usage (e.g., subject/verb agreement, correct use of "I" and "me") • begins to use a variety of words • uses spacing between words • uses eight words as well as inventions and approximations • begins sentence with a capital letter • uses end punctuation • shows sound/letter correspondence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses language appropriate for the audience/purpose • uses descriptive and figurative language • makes few errors in usage • uses a variety of words effectively • makes few errors in spelling • makes few errors in capitalization • makes few errors in punctuation • makes few errors in correctness that do not interfere with the meaning
CORRECTNESS			

MEMOIR

BEGINNING WRITING

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences • engages in the act of writing without specific attention to meaning • experiments with marks on a page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences • begins to focus on a topic (person, place, animal, or thing)
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/ SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses drawings, symbols, and letter-like marks to represent words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to support ideas with drawings, symbols, one or two letters to represent a word
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows some evidence of directionality (top to bottom, left to right) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates directionality • attempts to demonstrate a story line
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may use some letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • labels pictures or produces simple text using symbols, letter-like marks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses word attempts or words to describe drawings • writes a few sight words, especially those with particular meaning to the writer
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lacks spacing • may use scribbles, symbols, letter-like marks, letter reversals, and/or strings of random letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses some spacing between words • uses one or two letters to represent a word; uses other inventions and approximations to represent words • begins a sentence (copied or dictated) with a capital letter • ends sentence (copied or dictated) with punctuation • begins to show sound/letter correspondence

BEGINNING - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrow topics
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (topic) - dog
- uses scribbles to communicate
- produces drawings with teacher dictation -
"I am thankful for my dog."
(as told to teacher)



NEXT LESSONS:

- guided writing with beginning sounds
- using details in drawing

BEGINNING - MEMOIR

My Family

• chooses
and narrows
topic (family)

• focuses on relationship
between writer and subject
(family)

• uses drawings, symbols, letter-like
marks to represent words and thought

• lacks
spacing



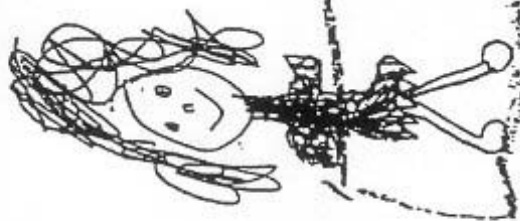
NEXT LESSONS:

- forming letters
- recognizing beginning and ending sounds

- chooses and narrows topic (family)
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (family)
- writes a few sight words, especially those with meaning to the writer

MAX → FAMILY

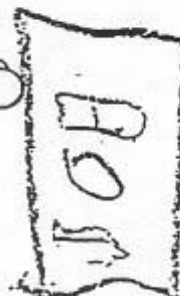
- spacing between words
- demonstrates directionality



WHITNEY



NOM



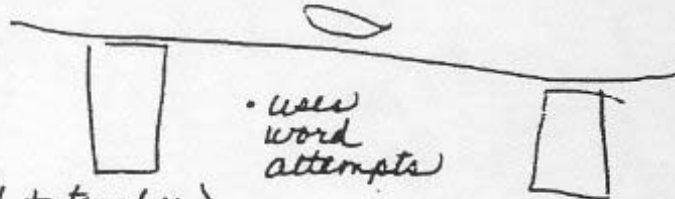
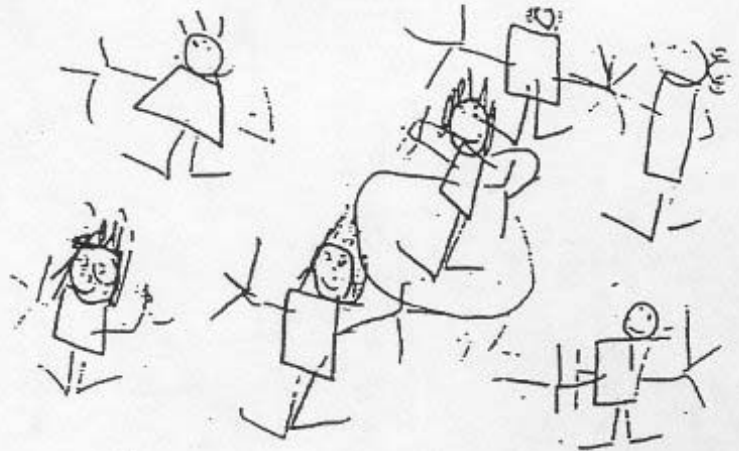
PAM

NEXT LESSONS:

- guided writing with developmental spelling
- telling a thought about his/her family

BEGINNING - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrows topic (cousins)
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (cousins)



Translation (as told to teacher)

"I played with my
cousins on Thanksgiving
Day."

• uses
word
attempts

IPIDY

• shows some
sound/letter
correspondence

NEXT LESSONS:

- demonstrating directionality
- spacing between words

BEGINNING - MEMOIR

- demonstrates directionality

M Y FTV STFD
A N M L A J P OOH
N B N B

- supports ideas with drawings and simple phrases

- uses a few words to resemble a sentence

- uses a few sight words

- uses spacing between words

- shows sound/letter correspondence

- chooses and narrows topic (Ash and Bernie Baby)
- focuses on the relationship between writer and subject



NEXT LESSONS:

- adding details
- using lowercase letters

BEGINNING - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrows topic (Suzanne)
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (Suzanne)

• creates a title

I like

• spacing between words

Suzanne

• writes some simple sentences

Suzanne is

• uses sight words as well as inventions and approximations

Nice I like

• logical sequence

me a lot

• begins to use some descriptive words

Nice is nice

• expresses feelings

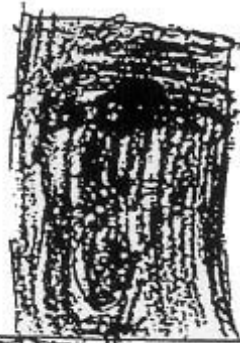
• demonstrates directionality
• has beginning, middle, end

NEXT LESSONS:

- adding details
- using end punctuation

BEGINNING - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrows topic (lion)
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (lion)
- focuses on the purpose of relating the significance of the relationship between the writer and the subject



- writes simple, complete sentences



- supports idea with one or two details

I have a lion. His name is Stamps. He is a very special lion. He is soft. He makes have good dreams.

- uses some sensory detail

- uses more correct spelling
- begins sentences with capital letters (not always correctly)
- uses end punctuation

NEXT LESSONS:

- working on expressing knowledge and feelings
- oral proofreading

MEMOIR

DEVELOPING WRITING

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences • begins to focus on the topic (person, place, animal, or thing) • begins to express own feelings • begins to show some evidence of individual voice • begins to use titles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to show awareness of reader's needs • chooses topic from personal experiences • narrows topic to the importance of the relationship between the writer and the person, place, animal, or thing • focuses on the purpose of relating the importance of the relationship between the writer and the person, place, animal, or thing • expresses own thoughts and feelings • uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone • uses title
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with pictures, simple phrases, one or two details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with one or two relevant, specific details • uses some description of emotions, thoughts, and insights • uses some sensory detail and imagery • attempts to use dialogue when appropriate
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates directionality • demonstrates some logical order • writes a beginning (lead), middle (body), and conclusion (ending) • borrows structure from models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates logical order • attempts to develop an engaging lead • attempts to develop an effective conclusion • begins to use paragraphs • begins to use transitions
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes some simple sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes complete sentences • begins to use some variety in sentence structure/length
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to use some descriptive language • shows some evidence of correct word usage (e.g., subject/verb agreement, correct use of "I" and "me") • begins to use a variety of words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses some descriptive and figurative language • demonstrates frequent, correct word usage (e.g., subject/verb agreement, correct use of "I" and "me") • uses a variety of words
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses spacing between words • uses sight words as well as inventions and approximations • begins sentence with a capital letter • uses end punctuation • shows sound/letter correspondence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses more correct spelling, less invention and approximation • uses more correct capitalization • uses more correct punctuation

DEVELOPING - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrows topic (Max)
- focuses on the relationship between the writer and the subject (Max)
- shows individual voice
- shows logical order
- supports ideas with relevant details
- uses end punctuation

- uses a variety of words
 - writes complete sentences
 - demonstrates directionality
 - has beginning, middle, and end
 - develops relationship by listing things the writer and subject do together
 - uses more correct spelling
- I feed Max dog food.
Max and I love.
I take Max to the pet store to take him a bath. Max bites a little bit. Max sleeps in a cage.
Max does not have a doghouse. I give him dog bones for Max to be good. We play with Max. Max chases a cat I tell him No says me
- begins sentences with capital letter
- attempts dialogue

NEXT LESSONS:

- narrowing focus
- using descriptive language

DEVELOPING - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrows topic (Kyle)
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (Kyle)
- writes a beginning and middle, lacks an end
- uses paragraphs
- supports ideas with relevant details

- writes simple sentences

I Like Kyle.
He is my best friend.
He is in my class.

- shows logical order

He is nice.
He never gets me in
trouble. And he never
gets himself in trouble

- uses more correct spelling, less approximation

~~He~~ He Likes
the same food. He likes
pizza, coke, and chips.

- uses more correct punctuation

He plays
with me at recess.
We play foot ball.

A+
School on Fridays we play
on the computers. And
some times we go to
cooking.

We both
like the rug rats. we
both like the movie

NEXT LESSONS:

- locating details in models which reveal thoughts and feelings
- using varied sentence structure

DEVELOPING - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrows topic (mom)
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (mom)
- supports ideas with specific, relevant details
- logical order with a beginning, middle, and end

• creates a title A Special Person

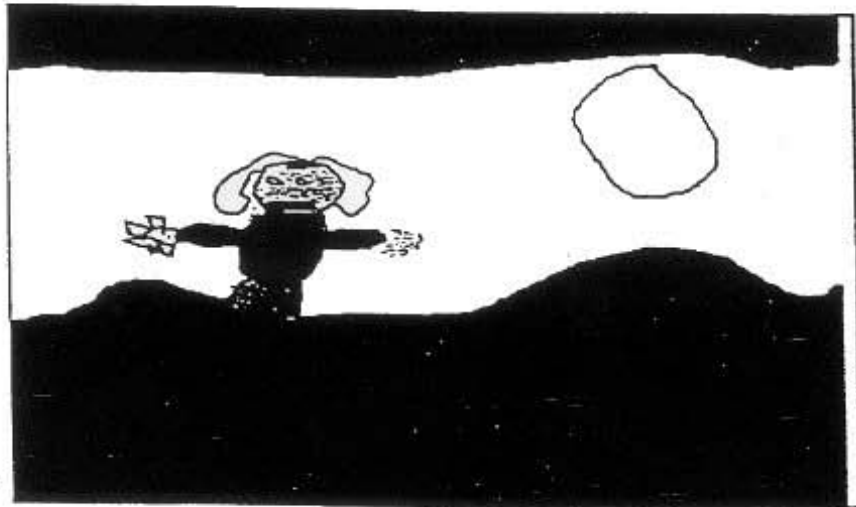
- writes in complete sentences
- has varied sentence structure
- subjects and verbs agree

A special person in my life is my mom. She is special in my life because she helps me. She helps me when I'm sick. She gives me coke. She helps me with my home work when I'm having trouble like the time I couldn't find the ocean on a peace of paper, she helped me find it. My mom helps me calm down when I'm hyper like the time when we were at a pool and she said go down the water slid one more time then get in the hot tub then well leave. I didn't want to leave so she ordered me French fries to make it longer.

My mom is also special because she teaches me. She taught me how to ride my bike. My mom taught me how to do puzzles. My mom also taught me how to swim.

My mom is also special because she loves me. I now she loves me because she reeds to me, she feeds me, and she celebrates my birthday. My mom is the best to me.

- uses paragraphs



- uses more correct spelling and punctuation

- attempts to use more variety of words

NEXT LESSONS:

- creating an attention-getting title by looking at models
- varying sentence beginnings

DEVELOPING - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrows topics (dad)
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (dad)

My Special Person ← creates a title

My Special Person is my dad. I love to go fishing with my dad. Sometime we even go camping to a lot. Winter my dad and I made an snowman together. I helped work on our house.

• uses paragraphs

My dad and I go fishing at Lake Cumberland.

• writes complete sentences

We buy our worms when we go fishing. Sometimes we go to Green River.

Sometimes we sit on the

- supports ideas with one or two specific details

bank and just wait for a fish to bite. Sometimes we cook together. We even sleep together.

My dad and I had a snowball fight. We slid down the hill. We even hid on the lawn mower in the winter. In some places we couldn't because the snow was too deep.

My dad and I built the back deck. I helped put up the guardrail. We also

- has subject/verb agreement
- shows logical order
- uses more correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation

built the front porch.

I love work with my
dad. We have a good time
building.

NEXT LESSONS:

- creating an attention-getting title
by looking at models
- creating an effective conclusion

MEMOIR

COMPETENT (end of P4) WRITING

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows awareness of reader's needs • chooses topic from personal experiences • narrows topic to the importance of the relationship between the writer and the person, place, animal, or thing • focuses on the purpose of relating the importance of the relationship between the writer and the person, place, animal, or thing • expresses own thoughts and feelings • uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone • creates a title that captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/ SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with two or three relevant, specific details • describes emotions, thoughts, and insights • uses sensory details and imagery • uses dialogue when appropriate
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • places ideas and details in meaningful order • writes an engaging lead • writes an effective conclusion • uses paragraphs • uses some transition words and phrases
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes complete sentences • uses a variety of sentence structures/lengths
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses language appropriate for the audience/purpose • uses descriptive and figurative language • makes few errors in usage • uses a variety of words effectively
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes few errors in spelling • makes few errors in capitalization • makes few errors in punctuation • makes few errors in correctness that do not interfere with the meaning

COMPETENT (P4) - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrows topic (Uncle Dwight)
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (Uncle Dwight)
- evidence of logical order
- creates a title which captures the reader's interest
 - A Very Sad Day
 - One of the saddest days of my life was a most three years ago. February 8, 1996, my Uncle Dwight died. He had a terrible disease that made him sick.
- uses paragraphs
- evidence of voice
- supports ideas with relevant details
 - He was a good friend as well as my uncle. Together we made cookies, played ball, took walks on grandpa's farm, and just talked. Even though he lived in Columbus, he came to my soccer games. He went on vacation to the beach with him. He also took Kristen and me to the zoo, COSI and kid zone.
- begins to use transitions
 - (Now) that he is gone, all I have is my memories of the fun stuff we did. When I miss him a lot I read the poem "Miss Me But Let Me Go." It makes me cry and makes me feel better at the same time.
- effective conclusion
 - writes complete sentences
 - has sentence variety
- has errors in correctness that do not interfere with meaning

NEXT LESSONS:

- developing ideas by using relevant supporting details from life experiences
- using correct spelling and punctuation

COMPETENT (P4) - MEMOIR

- chooses and narrows topic
- focuses on relationship between writer and subject (Grandma)

MY GRANDMA

- creates a title

Who is sweet, kind, and loves me very much. Give up? My Grandma. My Grandma is angel. hula over her head.

- writes an engaging lead

I can't say no if someone ask me to go to Grandma's house.

- uses a variety of words effectively

She always makes me my favorite dinner which is roast beef, macaroni and cheese, and tomatoes (with salt).

- supports ideas with two or three specific details

I can't forget the movie part, she always gets me a movie and sometimes they are so funny I fill up with laughter until I burst it all out.

• uses transitions

Sometimes we go to Ajuncy and she gets me a coloring book, crayons, a notebook, and markers so new that you can still smell the fresh smell.

- varied sentence structure

In the morning when the sun touches me with its light and I wake up we go get donut fresh from the bakery.

- uses sensory details and imagery

My mom and dad don't buy chocolate milk in cartoons, my favorite thing to drink beside pop, because they say it cost too much money in cartoons, but they're really only \$2.00 or \$3.00 dollars. So Grandma to the rescue again. She always gets me chocolate milk.

- evidence of voice

Another thing Grandma does is get good birthday presents. Since he's not \$20.00 from Grandma for his birthday. I'll probably get it too.

- evidence of voice

• transitions

- uses paragraphs

- describes emotions, thoughts, insights
- places ideas and details in meaningful order

my Grandma is so sweet.
She always has coke and chips at her house so when I go there she always gives me a coke.

My other favorite drink is fruit punch so she has like 5 bottles of that just for me. Sometimes I wish that I could just snap my fingers and be at Grandma's house.

• evidence of voice

• transition

At night when I'm in bed I think about what Grandma is doing. I wonder if she is in bed, watching T.V., or talking on the phone.

• transition

Whenever I'm at her house we always go eat pizza at O'rilias Pizza. It's so good it's almost as good as Grandma. They have a play place at the O'rilias pizza and there's a sign that says ages 3 to 10 only, so she stands out by the door and watches me.

• has a beginning, middle, and end

I love my Grandma and nobody can change that.

- chooses language appropriate for purpose/audience
- writes complete sentences

NEXT LESSON:

- developing various effective endings (e.g., a circular ending which would tie back to the lead)
- using correct spelling and punctuation

MEMOIR

GRADES 4 - 8

The writer of a proficient memoir demonstrates most or all of the following skills:

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE

- focuses on the purpose of relating the significance of the relationship between the writer and the subject of the memoir
- narrows topic; limits memoir to a particular phase, time period, place, or recurring behavior
- leaves the reader with a single impression of the subject
- uses an individual voice
- creates a title which captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest

IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT

- develops ideas by using relevant supporting details from life experiences
- describes emotions, thoughts, and insights
- uses dialogue effectively, if appropriate
- uses sensory details
- makes the subject come alive for the reader

ORGANIZATION

- writes an engaging lead
- places ideas and details in meaningful order
- organizes the memoir into paragraphs
- uses transitions between ideas
- maintains coherence and unity
- concludes the memoir effectively

SENTENCES

- writes complete and varied sentences

LANGUAGE

- chooses language appropriate to the audience and purpose
- writes in first person
- uses descriptive language
- maintains consistent verb tense
- makes subjects and verbs agree
- employs correct usage

CORRECTNESS

- spells correctly
- uses correct end punctuation, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes
- capitalizes correctly
- makes few errors in correctness which do not interfere with the meaning of the piece

As students move from grade to grade, they demonstrate growth in the control and complexity with which they use these skills.

GRADE 4 - MEMOIR

The writer focuses on ways in which Bessi is funny.

The Funniest Dog Ever

Title indicates main idea of the memoir.

Lead engages audience.

Hey, you animal lovers out there! What is black with tan legs and a tan face? When you make a balloon squeak

relevant details

this noisy animal cocks its head to listen? You couldn't have guessed it! It's my dog Bessi! My dog is the best dog in the whole universe.

individual voice

writes in first person

transition The other day I went outside after getting all my

homework done to ride my bike. One time before, I almost ran over my dog. I didn't want to do it again. This time she was in front of the garage. She wasn't anywhere near the

uses experiences to support the main idea

bike. I realized she ran away, because she was scared of my

detail bike. I just laughed at my silly dog. But I was glad she was so smart to move!

connects to focused purpose

transition One time I was sitting in the swing, and my mom and dad were setting there too. My dad scratched Bessi's ear,

organized logically and in paragraphs

connects to focused purpose
and she showed her teeth. I laughed my head off. So my dad did it again. She did the same thing. I kept on doing it until my mom said, "It's time to go in." I wonder if she was wanting me to brush her teeth.

Transition Just the other day while I was doing my homework, Bessi came upon the porch. My brother came in the kitchen

at that time with a balloon. Mom extended out her hand,
effective language
"Give me the balloon, Josh."

uses dialogue to add details
"OK," answered Josh. So mom got the balloon, blew it

Sentence Variety
up and pulled the ends and made it squeak. Bessi cocked *effective language*
her head to listen. Mom did it again. I wonder if Bessi thought mom had another baby.

Transition Another time, I remember Bessi was lying under the picnic table at Labor Day. We had people in our family coming over to eat with us. After we had cooked the fish we sit down to eat. I grabbed too many fries and two fell on the ground. She gobbled them up. She was waiting for more

effective language

food to fall but none fell. She always lies under the picnic table when we have a cookout. She probably thought, "Am I invisible?" Nobody was dropping their food, but she was too short to jump upon the picnic table to get the food.

transition

By now you should agree with me that my dog makes *focused purpose*
me laugh, because I use to have a dog that would always run away, and I would never get to spend much time with him. But I have a great dog now that I can spend time with,

and that makes me crack up!

effective language

concludes by repeating main idea, leaving the reader with a single impression of Bessi

few errors in correctness

NEXT LESSONS:

- revealing the writer's thoughts to achieve the purpose
- using strong verbs
- varying sentence beginnings

GRADE 5 - MEMOIR

The writer focuses on revealing the relationship between her friend and herself.

My Special Friend

Title indicates main idea of the memoir.

The writer develops the main idea through

examples of Dixie's friendship and faithfulness (recurring behavior).

example with specific details from life experiences

example with specific details

example with specific details

example with specific details

surprise ending

few errors in correctness

When I was young around five years old, I had the most

faithful friend that anyone could have. She was funny, playful, kind, and was always there for me. She is my best friend and no one can change that!

I'll never forget the day she came to my house to play. She did everything I did, and with pleasure. She would play hide and

seek with me if no one else wanted to play with me. That was something that my old friends would never do.

She is short, has dark brown shinning eyes, and a lot of

blond hair! Her shinning eyes and long hair will always comfort

me when I have a bad dream. Once I dreamed that a monster was under my bed. My friend knew I was scared so she slept with me just so I would have a good nights sleep.

She's never complained about what we should do. When I want to have something to eat she will eat what ever I will eat, (even though she doesn't really like salad.) When we moved from Pennsylvania to Kentucky she even volunteered to come along. She made the 16 hour trip fun even though she got car sick on the Ninth hour! She still didn't fuss over it.

She is truly my best friend! She is always there in joy or tears. When my hamster, Summer, escaped from her cage, she helped me find her. When we found Summer she had died, but my best friend comforted me through my tears by standing near me.

My best friend is one of the family. She is so special to me that people say we're sisters so I even think we are. Her name is Dixie and she is a Golden Retriever dog. Even though she's a dog, she still means the world to me!

Language supports main idea.

reflection

The writer related Dixie's

physical characteristics to examples of faithfulness.

reflection

concludes by reflecting on relationship

NEXT LESSONS:

- using descriptive language
- varying sentence beginnings

Note: Although this piece was written by a 4th grader, it exemplifies 5th grade standards.

GRADE 6 - MEMOIR

Her Loving Touch

Title captures the essence of the piece: Miss Maizte's physical and emotional touches

uses individual voice

writes in first person

I popped every other berry in my mouth, that one Spring

morning in

, Kentucky. This was my favorite thing to do,

engaging lead

picking raspberries in Mrs. Maizte's garden in the country. Mrs. Maizte

focuses on the relationship

was my first babysitter, but more like a grandmother to me. When

every I dropped a berry, she laughed. When ever a red ant bit my

ankle she wrapped it in a warm handkerchief, and just because of her

loving touch I felt all better. Everyone she has ever met or ever will

meet thinks she is a saint, along with me.

There are four things I will always remember about her. The

cookies she makes for Christmas, the tea set in her kitchen (the one I

used to play princess with), her hammock in her backyard, and of

course.....her raspberry garden.

transition

Now Mrs. Maizte is 74, her shoulders that I used to hug and still

do are frail. Her muscles are tired and her skin is wrinkled, but inside

juxtaposes inner and outer qualities

she is as full of energy as she ever has been. She has lived through the

develops the subject of the memoir

Holocaust, many illnesses, and three generations, which she has taken

great care of, and it amazes me how energetic she still is. Also I think it

is great how she keeps giving and giving and never asks for a thing in return.

develops
relationship
with
relevant
details

Picking raspberries, playing with lizards, and putting on plays in
her basement is fun, but the best part of visiting Mrs. Maizte's house is
just being with her. I will always love her and when she is too old to
care for herself I will take care of her, like she has taken care of me. I
will pick her raspberries for her and put on funny plays to cheer her up
in her basement.

Connects
to title

Mrs. Maizte has touched my life in a way that no one else could or
ever has in the past. When her heart stops and spirit fads in my heart
she will still be the same. She has made me thankful for having such an
easy life, from her stories of all the dreadful things that have happened
to her. She has taught me "that if you judge another person from what
you see on the outside, and do not try to look inside of them and find
who they really are, then people may not think you are worth looking
into beneath your skin, your soul."

moves from
ways Miss M.
has
physically
touched the
writer to
the way
Miss M.
has
touched
the writer's
life

Shows
writer's
insight
into the
meaning
of the
relationship

Complex
sentences

All of her knowledge, I think has made me a stronger person,
especially with people and understanding them. Even though she may
not know what the latest fashion is or what's hot and what's not, I still
think she is the most outstanding person around. Maybe in 50 years

Shows writer's
insight
into the
significance
of the
relationship

someone will still be trying to keep up with the fashion, but knowledge will stick with you forever and it is way more important than the style.

connects
to lead

My friends all say "she can't be as special as a *real* grandmother!"

I just say, that in my mind and heart she is as real as any other grandmother. I know that blood-wise we are not related, but the heart is more important.

reflects on significance of relationship
few errors
in correctness

NEXT LESSONS:

- using specific language
- varying sentence structures to enhance the intended effect

Note: Although this piece was written by a 5th grader, it exemplifies 6th grade standards.

GRADE 7 - MEMOIR

BOB

The title sets the reader up to believe the memoir will be about a person.

Lead surprised reader.

He stood about eight inches tall. He was originally pink, but his color faded to a dingy beige from all the hugs and kisses I gave him, and from all the many adventures we had together. The color of his eyes never faded, though. They were as blue as the sea, and he had a tiny white nose and furry little ears that stood straight up in the air. He was a pink bunny whom I called Bob.

develops nature of relationship with details describing how her treatment of the bunny changed his appearance but not her devotion to him

Sensory details describe Bob's appearance.

"I love you," I'd say as I held him close to my chest and gave him a big kiss. He would squeek whenever I squeezed his pink belly, which is probably what I remember most about him.

Effective language describes writer's treatment of Bob.

At night he would keep me company and protect me from the Boogey Man. I held him close to me so that nobody would dare take him away from me. He was so warm, cuddly, and soft! He was like a warm, furry puppy, but he smelled like he had been loved on, and possibly drooled on a little, too.

We had lots of adventures together on grandma and grandpa's swing in the backyard, but the one adventure that I remember most was the time we went to the grocery store with my mom.

transitional paragraph

develops incident with relevant details

We had already left the grocery store and were on our way back home in the car when I realized that Bob was missing. I began screaming and crying, "Bob! Mommy, I can't find Bob!" Mom reassured me that Bob was probably sitting on a shelf in the grocery exactly where I left him, but I was not convinced. Mom knew that she had no choice but to return to the store and try to find Bob.

effective sentence structure

incident emphasizes devotion to Bob.

Mom took me by the hand and led me to the manager's office where the lost and found was located. There sat Bob, acting as if nothing had happened, "Bob, don't wander away from me again," I scolded.

personification emphasizes relationship effective use of dialogue

connects to rest of piece by contrasting present character with ones mentioned earlier

Nowadays Bob lives at my grandmother's house. His belly doesn't squeak anymore -- it sounds like you're squeezing an empty plastic ball when you hug him. His nose is almost worn off on the end. He's no longer pink and some of his fur is a little sticky on the ends. When I was about five years old I had many other toys, but Bob will always remain the toy I love the most.

concludes by reflecting on meaning of relationship

NEXT LESSON:

- revising sentences to eliminate being verbs (This often turns telling into showing.)

GRADE 8 - MEMOIR

*focused on relationship
between writer and
her sister*

Typical Sisters

*Title captures
essence of the
piece.*

*narrows topic to several
experiences which exemplify
the relationship*

"Beep! Beep!" my play plastic cash register squealed as my sister pulled cans of green beans, corn, and everything else we took out of the kitchen cabinets over the scanner. When her five turns to be the "check out woman" as we referred to it was over, I would scream with delight, "It's my turn! It's my turn!"

*Lead
engages
reader
and
establishes
the
relationship
between
the sisters*

With a disgusted, evil, like grin on her face she would reply, "I don't feel like playing anymore!" And as little kids do, I would run and get my mom. Mom would make her play until my turns were over and the whole time she would call me, "whinny baby!" or "tattle tail!"

transition We played many more games, such as dentist and house. Of course when we played house, guess who was the mom all of the time; Ashley, go

*descriptive
language*

Voice figure! One time while we were playing house, she wrapped me up in a

*Continues to
develop the
relationship
through
games they
played
(unity)*

*descriptive
language* blue, white, and pink striped knit blanket and carried me around with a little bitty plastic baby bottle in my mouth. She sat me on the record player and said, "Don't move! I'll be right back!"

transition Being the naive little kid I was, I layed there, waiting. Every once in a

*effective
variety
in
sentence
structure* while I'd raise up to see if she was coming. I had been abandoned! After laying there for awhile, I got up and started searching for her. When I found her, she was in the living room with Mom and Dad, watching TV. I

confronted her in an impolite way, "Why didn't you come back!" I shouted.

*Dialogue
advances
action.*

Her simple reply was, "I forgot!" To this day, I still don't believe that she "forgot." My theory is, she got tired of playing and she accidentally-on-purpose left me lying there.

transition When I became a little older, and not so gullible, she couldn't trick me as easy, but she still got in a good laugh every once in a while. When I was

*descriptive
language*

about five or six, one of my front top teeth was loose. My sister called me into her room and said, "Let's play dentist!" With me being the one with the loose tooth I was the patient. "You can surprise mom after I pull your tooth!" It took a little bribing before I said yes, but she knew exactly how to trick me so she could get her way. She quietly went and got a wet washcloth, trying to make the least amount of noise possible so it would be a secret. She came back and before I had enough time to change my mind about her crazy idea, she yanked on my tooth a couple of times and it came right out. When it had just about stopped bleeding, Mom hollered, "What do you girls want for lunch?" I ran into the kitchen and said, "Grilled cheese please!" putting the biggest grin on my face possible. Even though I liked Ashley's idea and surprising Mom, I didn't like the pain!

Dialogue
advances
the action

continued
to develop
relationship
through games

Now my sister is eighteen and I'm thirteen. It goes without saying that we don't play store or house anymore. I think our favorite thing to do together now is fight (when she isn't teasing me!). We can't agree on the simplest things anymore. Our time together went from all of the time, to a few hours in the afternoons, if we're lucky. What has happened to us? I guess we both grew up. The most drastic change in our relationship was when she was a freshmen in high school. She started liking Anthony _____ and can you believe it, she still does! The little extra time she has she spends it with him. I knew it was going to happen sooner or later, but it just happened so fast.

Varied
sentences

Paragraph
provides
transition
from
then to
now.

voice

There are a few good things about our relationship such as, she helps me with my homework when I don't understand it, and she takes me places with her, even when her and "the brother I never asked for" (Anthony) as I refer to him go somewhere. This year on my mom and dad's anniversary, Ashley and I went to Taco John's in _____ to eat. We stopped and

descriptive
language;
voice

picked Anthony up at his house because he wanted to go with us. When we got there I moaned and groaned, "Now I have to get in the back!"

"No you don't," she replied in a spontaneous sort of way. "You can sit up front. It won't hurt him to sit in the back!"

"He'll pull me out of the car though!" I replied, getting ready to get in the backseat.

"No he won't. Just lock your door."

affirms relationship Satisfied I sat back and locked my door. Her letting me sit up front made me feel privileged. "Ha!" I said when he climbed in the back seat.

I love my sister very much, and not just because she's my sister. She has been one of my role models since I've been able to walk and talk.

Now, after all this time has passed, I regret all of the arguments we had. I wish I could turn back time and do it all over again. The time flew by

so fast. It seems just like yesterday that we were playing all of those games. What happened to those two little girls? But, it could be worse, and it probably will get worse, especially when she moves out. Hopefully, that's a long way away.

few errors in correctness

descriptive language

reflects on significance of relationship

connects to earlier description

effective sentence structure

NEXT LESSONS:

- cutting out irrelevant material
- creating an effective conclusion

PRIMARY DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUM

SHORT STORY		Beginning		Developing		Competent (end of P4)	
AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• chooses topics from personal experiences and interests• engages in the act of writing without specific attention to meaning• experiments with marks on a page	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• chooses topics from personal experiences and interests• begins to focus on a topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• chooses topics from own experiences and interests• begins to focus on the topic• begins to express own feelings• begins to show some evidence of individual voice• begins to use titles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• chooses topic from experiences and interests• narrow topic• focuses on a purpose• uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone• uses title	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• shows awareness of the reader's needs• chooses topics from a variety of sources, experiences, and interests• narrow topic• focuses on a purpose• uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone• creates a title that captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest		
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses drawings, symbols, letter-like marks to represent words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• begins to support ideas with drawings, symbols, one or two letters to represent a word	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• supports ideas with pictures, simple phrases, one or two details• attempts some development of characters• attempts some description of setting• begins to use a conflict or problem/solution to develop plot	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• supports ideas with one or two relevant, specific details• shows more description of setting• shows more use of conflict or problem/solution to develop plot• uses some sensory detail and imagery• attempts to use dialogue when appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• supports ideas with two or three relevant, specific details• develops setting• develops characters through thoughts, actions, description• develops plot through conflict or problem/solution• uses sensory details and imagery• uses dialogue when appropriate		
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• shows some evidence of directionality (top to bottom, left to right)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• demonstrates directionality• attempts to demonstrate a story line	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• demonstrates directionality• demonstrates some logical order• demonstrates a story line• has a beginning (lead), middle (body), end (conclusion)• borrows story structure from models	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• demonstrates logical order• attempts to develop an engaging lead• attempts to develop an effective conclusion• begins to use paragraphs• begins to use transitions• uses story structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• places ideas and details in meaningful order• writes an engaging lead• writes an effective conclusion• uses paragraphs• uses some transition words and phrases• uses story structure		
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• may use some letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• writes some simple sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• writes complete sentences• begins to use some variety in sentence structure/length	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• writes complete sentences• uses a variety of sentence structures/lengths		
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• labels pictures or produces simple text using symbols or letter-like marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses word attempts or words to describe drawings• writes a few eight words, especially those with particular meaning to the writer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• begins to use some descriptive language• shows some evidence of correct word usage (e.g., subject/verb agreement, correct use of "I" and "me")	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses some descriptive and figurative language• demonstrates frequent, correct word usage (e.g., subject/verb agreement, correct use of "I" and "me")• uses a variety of words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• chooses language appropriate for the audience/purpose• uses descriptive and figurative language• makes few errors in usage• uses a variety of words effectively		
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• lacks spacing• may use scribbles, letter-like marks, letter reversals, and/or strings of random letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses some spacing between words• uses one or two letters to represent a word; uses other inventions or approximations to represent a word• begins a sentence (copied or dictated) with a capital letter• ends a sentence (copied or dictated) with correct punctuation• begins to show sound/letter correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses spacing between words• uses eight words as well as inventions and approximations• begins sentence with capital letter• uses end punctuation• shows sound/letter correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses more correct spelling, less invention and approximation• uses more correct capitalization• uses more correct end punctuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• makes few errors in spelling• makes few errors in capitalization• makes few errors in punctuation• makes few errors in correctness that do not interfere with meaning		

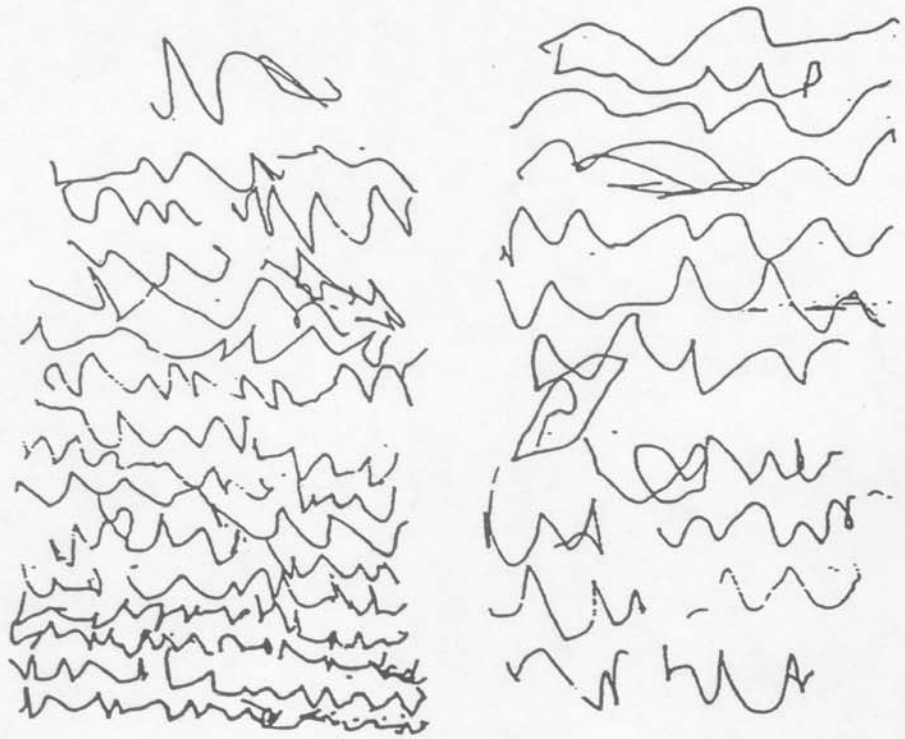
SHORT STORY

BEGINNING WRITING

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences and interests • engages in the act of writing without specific attention to meaning • experiments with marks on a page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from personal experiences and interests • begins to focus on a topic
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/ SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses drawings, symbols, letter-like marks to represent words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to support ideas with drawings, symbols, one or two letters to represent a word
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows some evidence of directionality (top to bottom, left to right) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates directionality • attempts to demonstrate a story line
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may use some letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses letters, strings of random letters, and/or a few words to resemble a sentence
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • labels pictures or produces simple text using symbols or letter-like marks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses word attempts or words to describe drawings • writes a few sight words, especially those with particular meaning to the writer
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lacks spacing • may use scribbles, letter-like marks, letter reversals, and/or strings of random letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses some spacing between words • uses one or two letters to represent a word; uses other inventions or approximations to represent a word • begins a sentence (copied or dictated) with a capital letter • ends a sentence (copied or dictated) with correct punctuation • begins to show sound/letter correspondence

BEGINNING - SHORT STORY

- experiments with marks on a page
- uses scribbles to represent words and sentences
- shows some evidence of directionality



NEXT LESSONS:

- making the picture/word connection
- recognizing sound/letter correspondence

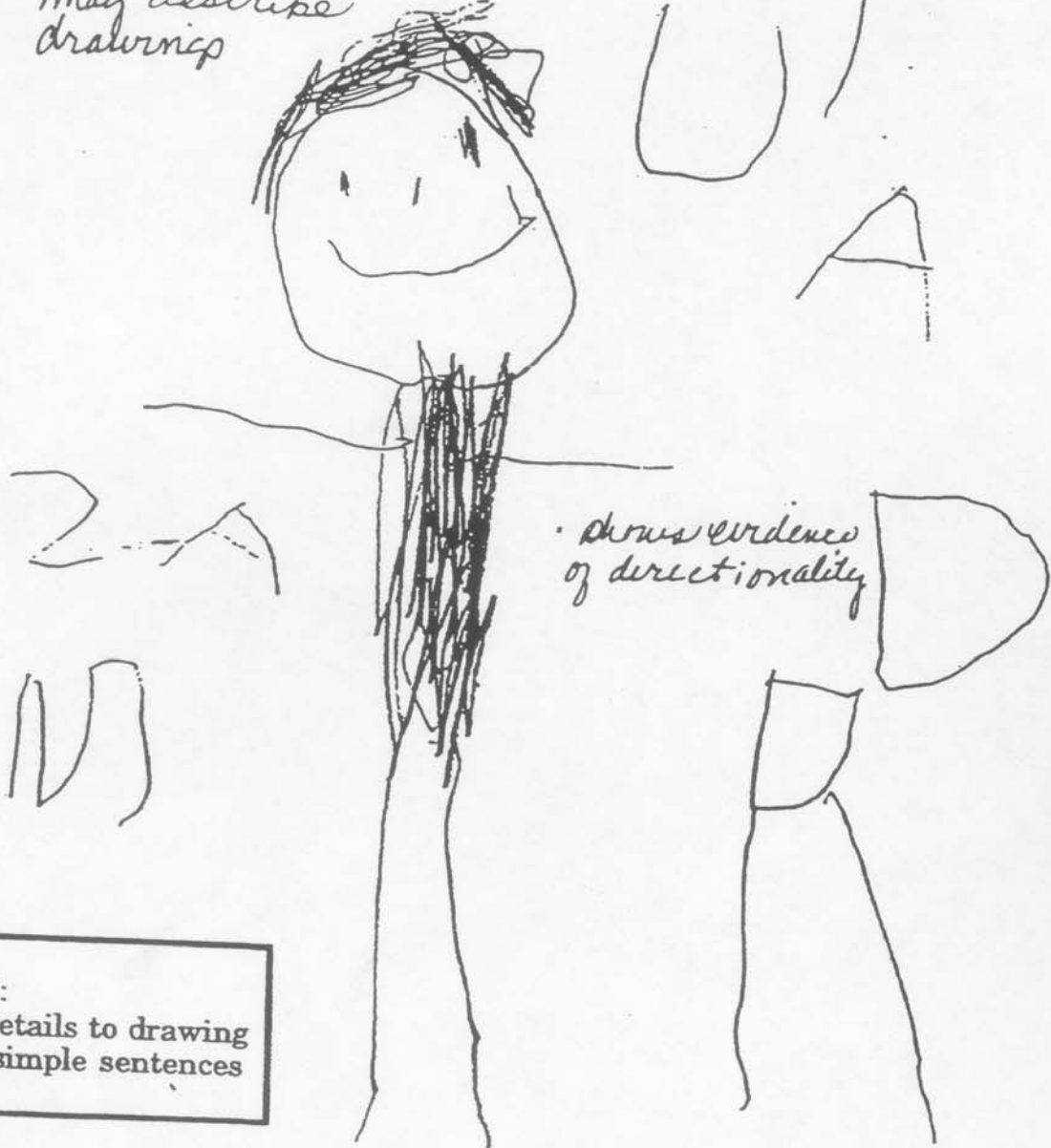
BEGINNING - SHORT STORY

- chooses topic from personal experiences and interests

M A X

- writes a few sight words, especially those with meaning to the writer

- word attempts and words may describe drawings



NEXT LESSONS:

- adding details to drawing
- writing simple sentences

BEGINNING - SHORT STORY

- chooses topic from personal experiences and interests

IEc 100 ECBPCPBICR
 cBECBR R PCBE
 CcBEBEA EAECBPC
 [aBBLohmhbcBCCdk
 Ibar n amamc

• lacks spacing

• writes strings
of random
letters

Pa B b a e
 Ba B P W ()))



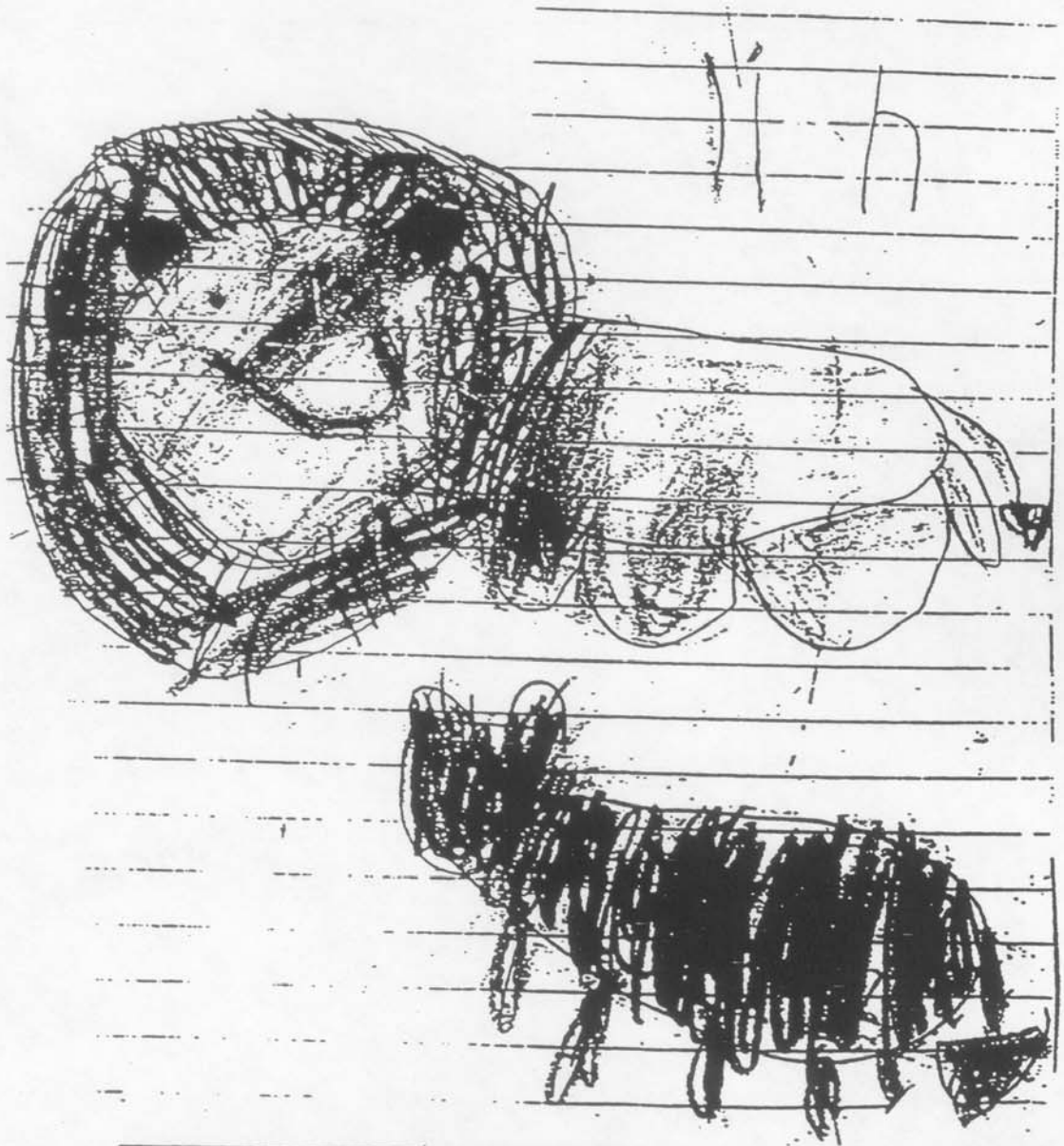
- labels pictures using symbols
or letter-like marks
- demonstrates directionality

NEXT LESSONS:

- connecting letter/sound/word
- building sight word vocabulary

BEGINNING - SHORT STORY

- chooses topic and focuses on topic
- word attempt describes drawing
- demonstrates some directionality



NEXT LESSONS:

- writing complete thoughts
- exploring models of print

BEGINNING - SHORT STORY

- uses strings of letters to resemble sentences and approximate print

- produces simple text using letters and letter-like marks

- supports idea(s) with drawings

- uses a sight word relevant to writer

- shows some left to right directionality



NEXT LESSONS:

- writing sentences
- recognizing letter/sound/word correspondence

BEGINNING - SHORT STORY

- chooses and focuses on a topic
- uses one or two letters, ^{inventions,}
and other approximations to represent a word

The S T R R <sup>• uses
a title</sup>

f^o The

- begins to borrow
story structure
from models

f Sh

- uses some spacing

W
No
PS

Translation (as told to teacher)

"The Story of the Fish with no Friends"

TR

WZ

2



- uses drawings, symbols to support idea(s)

A
fish

WZ
D

- uses problem/solution
- uses characters

Translation (as told to teacher)

"There was a fish with no friends."



• uses some sight words

• begins to demonstrate a storyline (beginning, middle, end)

• uses some spacing

Translation (as told to the teacher)

"The fish was very sad."



Translation (as told to the teacher)
"But then there was a mermaid."

T n The
f'sh AST

The
M M
F S W

Translation (as told to teacher) R F B
"Then the fish asked
the mermaid if she
would be her friend."

NEXT LESSONS:

- writing complete sentences
- building sight vocabulary

BEGINNING - SHORT STORY

- chooses topic from personal experiences, interests

DAYS WITH ^{creates title}

- focuses on a topic

RANE.

TITLE PAGE

- begins to demonstrate a story line with a beginning, middle, and end



IT WAS
A SUNNY
DAY.

- demonstrates understanding of directionality

Pg. 1

- uses drawings to support ideas

- borrows story structure from models

• uses some simple sentences



• uses spacing between words


IT CAME
A BIG #
HERACAN.
IT LITING.

• uses sight words as well as inventions and approximations

pg. 2

• begins sentences with a capital letter

• uses end punctuation



IT WAS
ASUNNY DAY
BUT IT
WAS A BIG
RANE.

NEXT LESSONS:

- supporting ideas with relevant details
- adding characters to a story

SHORT STORY

DEVELOPING WRITING

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses topics from own experiences and interests • begins to focus on the topic • begins to express own feelings • begins to show some evidence of individual voice • begins to use titles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to show awareness of reader's needs • chooses topic from experiences and interests • narrows topic • focuses on a purpose • uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone • uses title
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/ SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with pictures, simple phrases, one or two details • attempts some development of characters • attempts some description of setting • begins to use a conflict or problem/solution to develop plot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with one or two relevant, specific details • shows more description of setting • shows more description of characters • shows more use of conflict or problem/solution to develop plot • uses some sensory detail and imagery • attempts to use dialogue when appropriate
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates directionality • demonstrates some logical order • demonstrates a story line • has a beginning (lead), middle (body), end (conclusion) • borrows story structure from models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates logical order • attempts to develop an engaging lead • attempts to develop an effective conclusion • begins to use paragraphs • begins to use transitions • uses story structure
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes some simple sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes complete sentences • begins to use some variety in sentence structure/length
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to use some descriptive language • shows some evidence of correct word usage (e.g., subject/verb agreement, correct use of "I" and "me") • begins to use a variety of words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses some descriptive and figurative language • demonstrates frequent, correct word usage (e.g., subject/verb agreement, correct use of "I" and "me") • uses a variety of words
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses spacing between words • uses sight words as well as inventions and approximations • begins sentence with capital letter • uses end punctuation • shows sound/letter correspondence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses more correct spelling, less invention and approximation • uses more correct capitalization • uses more correct end punctuation

DEVELOPING - SHORT STORY

The terta. ^{creates a title}
• chooses and focuses on topic

ONE DAY I WAS PLAYING IN A CREEK.



• uses drawings to support ideas

AND I FOUND A TERTAL NEWUS,
EATING A COFISH

• Beginning to demonstrate a story line (beginning, middle, and end)



• demonstrates directionality



I went home and got some
• shows sound / letter correspondence

• uses drawings to support ideas



and I went back to the creek

NEXT LESSONS:

- using descriptive language
- using details



Was the teal stit there?
 Was the crofish stit here?



• shows evidence
 of individual
 voice



The teal WAS stit here
 but the crofish WERE not
 THE crofish WAS in the
 teal's swim.

• uses some spacing



• borrows story structure from models



DEVELOPING - SHORT STORY

- chooses and focuses on a topic

- attempts to use paragraph
↓
Lost Their Voice ← • creates a title
- uses problem/solution to develop plot
One cold snowy day a lion and a monkey and a horse and a City. Dulka and a fish. They lose their voice watching a parade cheering at the parade. They went back home and ate chicken noodle. Soup and drank lemon tea. and went to bed. The next morning they get their voice back ← • solution
- supports ideas with simple phrases
- demonstrates some logical order

- use capital letters at the beginning of the sentence
- use end punctuation

The End

- begins to use some variety in sentences

NEXT LESSONS:

- developing a character
- developing a setting

DEVELOPING - SHORT STORY

- chooses and narrows topic
- focuses on topic

- creates a title

One day Katie found a dog

- introduces a character and setting

in her back yard! She played with it.

- uses problem/solution to develop plot

The next day dad took

him away! Katie cried so

hard that she disappeared!

- shows evidence of individual voice
- uses inventions and approximations in spelling

Win dad got home he didn't

see her! He couldn't find her but

- shows evidence of logical order

- supports ideas with one or two details

they coont find her! Soda
got the dog! It fawnd her
Dad let her hav the wandr full
Dog! She had billyins uv fun

• has a beginning, middle, and end

• shows some correct word usage

• begins sentences with a capital letter

• ends sentences with correct punctuation

NEXT LESSONS:

- using paragraphs
- using descriptive language

DEVELOPING - SHORT STORY

- chooses, narrows, and focuses on a topic

little Elephants Bad day ^{creates a little}
One day little elephant
was at school. He had
tests all day and did not.

^{• uses problem/solution to develop plot}
get any reeses. When ^{• uses transitions} he
got home his mom was
not there and she did not
leave him a popcicle to eat.

When she got home

- supports ideas with one or two details

- demonstrates some development of characters

she was tired. Little elephant
 mother was very pretty she
 had beautiful ears that always
 stood up and she always had
 beautiful, making with lots of colors ^{• uses approximations}
 and she was always smiling.
 But right then little elephants
 mother ears were down. Her

- uses descriptive language
- uses complete sentences
- uses varied sentences

• uses a variety of words

make up was smeared all over
her face. They had left
overs for supper. Then

she told little elephant to

go to take a bath she said

be sure to wash behind your ears. ^{• begins to use dialogue}
After that brush your

tusk. then get to bed.

• begins sentences with capital letters
• uses correct end punctuation

- has a beginning, middle, and end
- demonstrates logical order

The next day was Saturday
little elephant got up early
trying not to wake up
mother. Little elephant thought
since I'm up why don't
I make mother breakfast
in bed. little elephant
said I will fix mother

- some focus on a purpose

ceared and toast. So as
little elephant went to get
a bowl they went big bang
pong. But the he got some cereal
and milk. He pored it together
in the bowl and put some toast
on the toaster and brought it
to mother. Soon it was no
longer a bad day.

NEXT LESSONS:

- writing engaging leads
- writing effective conclusions

DEVELOPING - SHORT STORY

- chooses topic
- uses some descriptive language
- has few errors that do not interfere with meaning

→ Sarah's Favorite Christmas

- uses paragraphs Long ago there was a little girl named Sarah Smith who was nine years old. She knew that in a couple of weeks it would be her favorite holiday, Christmas. She thought that the best part of Christmas was the beautiful Christmas lights. She liked the blue ones the most. This Christmas was going to be the best she had ever had. Well, she hoped it would be.
- has a beginning
- uses transitions → The next morning Sarah went to school in the cold snow. Once she was in the schoolhouse she was as warm as she could be. When the lesson was started Sarah had her mind on the Christmas turkey. She was thinking about the wonderful smell of the delicious turkey. And when her teacher called on her to answer a question she answered the question with a simple reply "good turkey". All the children laughed at her. *• evidence of voice*
- uses some sensory detail
- uses a variety of words On the way home a young boy knocked her down on the cold snow. She was so angry. When she had arrived home her mother was putting up the Christmas tree. Once a week had passed she seemed more excited than ever. Her present was the first present under the tree. Until her father brought her mother's present in. It was Christmas Day. So Sarah ran down stairs to see what Santa had brought her. In her stocking was a candy cane, a plum and a cute little doll. And she got to open the present under the Christmas tree. This really was the best Christmas she had ever had!
- demonstrates logical order
- writes complete sentences
- uses a variety of sentence structures/lengths

NEXT LESSONS:

- using dialogue correctly
- writing a middle and end

DEVELOPING - SHORT STORY

- chooses a topic
- uses individual voice

Lost in the Future • creates a title

• uses a
problem/
solution

Once upon a time my brother and I found a machine in a dump. It was snaking and it weird. we saw a button and it said something on it. My brother just wiped it and I just pushed his hand.

The machine just started. It also sounded weird, my brother and I started turning a purple color. Then, all of the sudden we saw a black and purple hairy thing. We went in a market and there was a purple and pink hairy monsters. It looked like there were little people under the tables.

• has a
beginning,
middle,
and end

I asked a monster "What year it was and what state we were in." The monster said, "Its year 2010 and your in Florida." My brother and I said, together "COOL!" Then, we said, "Can we stay here? The monster said, "I don't care."

• uses
dialogue

Then, we saw our mom and dad come. They said, "Where are we?" We said, "Your in Florida, and the year is 2010." They said, "COOL CAN WE STAY?" We said, "Can we stay?" They said, "You can stay."

• Variety of
sentence
structures/
lengths

So we stayed they, a few days later I woke up, and looked in the mirror. I was a purple and pink hairy thing! So was mom, dad, and brother. I woke them up. We said, "Lets build a time machine and get out of here and get back to the year 1999 and the state Kentucky."

• uses
paragraphing

We found metal and a steering wheel. My brother and dad built the time machine. My mom and I got our clothes, and stuff like that. We got in the time machine. My dad forgot to make a key, we waited. My dad finally got the key made. He started it, and we all turned a purple color. It started shaking again, we saw a peson. It was my brother's friend with my friend. They were happy to see us. My brother and I made a decsion. We decided to never touch buttons that we didn't know what they did.

• some
attempt
to develop
an effective conclusion

- uses end punctuation
- uses more correct capitalization

NEXT LESSONS:

- using descriptive language
- developing characters

SHORT STORY

COMPETENT (end of P4) WRITING

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows awareness of the reader's needs • chooses topics from a variety of sources, experiences, and interests • narrows topic • focuses on a purpose • uses individual voice and/or appropriate tone • creates a title that captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest
IDEA DEVELOPMENT/ SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports ideas with two or three relevant, specific details • develops setting • develops characters through thoughts, actions, description • develops plot through conflict or problem/solution • uses sensory details and imagery • uses dialogue when appropriate
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • places ideas and details in meaningful order • writes an engaging lead • writes an effective conclusion • uses paragraphs • uses some transition words and phrases • uses story structure
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes complete sentences • uses a variety of sentence structures/lengths
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses language appropriate for the audience/purpose • uses descriptive and figurative language • makes few errors in usage • uses a variety of words effectively
CORRECTNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes few errors in spelling • makes few errors in capitalization • makes few errors in punctuation • makes few errors in correctness that do not interfere with meaning

- chooses, narrows, and focuses a topic
- focuses on a purpose
- uses individual voice

How the Scared Scarecrow Was Scared ' ← creates a title

Once there was a scarecrow.

The scarecrow had a problem.

He was scared. He was scared of

crows. Every time he saw a crow

he yelled, "Help, help!" the next day

a snake came by just then a crow

was about to land on the scarecrow,

the scared scarecrow looked up

The crow landed right on the

scared scarecrow. You know what the

- begins to show awareness of audience/reader's needs
- has a beginning, middle, and end

• uses problem/solution to set up problem

• attempts to develop an engaging

• supports ideas with one or two relative details

• uses dialogue

• uses transitions

scarecrow did. He yelled, Help, Help. ^{dialogue}
He began to cry. And the crow left.
The snake said, ⁶⁶Why are you
scared of a crow? If you are a ^{was} ^{dialogue}
crow, then you shall not be scared.
That is why you are called a
scarecrow. But how can I not be
scared? said the scarecrow. ⁶⁶All the
crows are just crows. When you see
a crow just look like you are a

turnaround

statue and then when the crow
comes on you, make a loud noise
that will scare the crows. So that
is what the scared scarecrow did.
From now on the scared
scarecrow was no longer called
the scared scarecrow.

- uses more correct punctuation
- uses more correct spelling and capitalization
- writes complete sentences

NEXT LESSONS:

- using descriptive language
- developing a character

COMPETENT (P4) - SHORT STORY

- chooses, narrows, and focuses on a topic
- focuses on a purpose

A Shot ← • creates a title

- uses sensory details

Joe was outside with his mom. It was a cold clear night as it always was in Colorado. Joe's dad had gone on a business trip.

- shows some description of setting
- supports ideas with two or three relevant details

"Just yesterday it seemed a lot warmer," said Joe's mom. Joe had brown hair and, brown eyes just like his mother. Joe was feeling kind of cold so he asked.

"Can we go home now?"

"Sure," replied Joe's mom.

When they got home Joe went up to his room. His room had colorful wallpaper and, a goldfish tank at the end of it. Joe's mom called Joe to dinner. Joe's face was pale and, he was cold.

- uses individual voice / appropriate tone

"Are you okay?" asked Joe's mom.

"Yes," replied Joe.

They ate dinner quietly. Then Joe went upstairs, brushed his teeth and went to bed. It took Joe a long time to fall asleep.

- uses transitions

The next day when Joe woke up and, he wasn't feeling very good. He thought that he'd better tell his mom. He went downstairs and, told his mom. When Joe's mom heard this she sighed.

- shows some character development

"I go make an appointment with the doctor, but for

- uses problem/solution to develop plot
- uses paragraphs

- places ideas and details in meaningful order
- writes a beginning, middle, and end

now go back to bed."

- writes complete, varied sentences

Joe suddenly remembered when he was four years old. He had the fever and, he went to the doctor. The doctor told him he was going to give him a shot. The doctor had to hold him down and then the doctor came in with a needle. It had hurt so much he fell off the table he was sitting on. The next thing Joe knew his mom was calling him to go to the doctor. Joe was tired and, felt sick but he didn't want to go to the doctor.

Joe's mom drove Joe to the doctor. The thirty minute drive seemed like hours to Joe. When they arrived at the doctor he went straight to the doctors office. The doctor checked Joe everywhere.

- uses dialogue

"You have a sore throat," he said. "I'll have to give you a shot."

The doctor went out of the room and came back with a needle.

"It'll only take a second," he said.

- demonstrates correct word usage

Just like when I was four he thought. He waited for the pain but, felt nothing.

"It's over!" the doctor said.

"Good," replied Joe.

Joe felt dizzy so he decided to sleep. He slept all the way home. When Joe saw his mom in front of him. He

- uses a variety of words

told her about the shot and, he said. "I'll go to bed early."

"Without dinner?" she asked.

"Yeah, I'm not real hungry," and, with that he went to bed.

The next day he was feeling good again. He told his mom.

"Maybe because of the shot," she said.

"Maybe," Joe replied.

- *has few errors in spelling, capitalization and punctuation*

NEXT LESSONS:

- using descriptive language
- creating an effective lead

SHORT STORY

GRADES 4 - 8

The writer of a proficient short story demonstrates most or all of the following skills:

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE

- meets the reader's needs and expectations by adhering to the conventions of a short story
- focuses on the purpose
- narrows topic enough to be developed fully in a short story
- uses an individual voice
- creates a title which captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest

IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT

- develops characters through thoughts, actions, descriptions
- develops the plot through conflict and resolution
- uses dialogue to develop character and plot
- describes setting; creates a mood
- employs literary devices (e.g., foreshadowing, flashback, symbolism)
- uses sensory details

ORGANIZATION

- writes an engaging lead
- places ideas and details in meaningful order
- organizes the story into paragraphs
- uses transitions between ideas
- maintains coherence and unity
- concludes effectively

SENTENCES

- writes complete and varied sentences

LANGUAGE

- chooses language appropriate to the audience and purpose
- uses descriptive language
- maintains consistent verb tense
- makes subjects and verbs agree
- employs correct usage

CORRECTNESS

- spells correctly
- uses correct end punctuation, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes
- capitalizes correctly
- makes few errors in correctness which do not interfere with the meaning of the piece

As students move from grade to grade, they demonstrate growth in the control and complexity with which they use these skills.

GRADE 4 - SHORT STORY

Turkey Disguise

• has elements of a short story

Story is told in chronological order.

Specific details create a picture for reader and connect to what happens in story.

Setting detail is important to conflict.

Lead sets up conflict; story focuses on Turkey's effort to escape farmer.

descriptive language

Transition

Details provide continuity.

Varied sentences

It was the day before Thanksgiving. I was walking in the woods, when all of a sudden a shot hit 3 of my feathers off. I started running and I ran right into a garbage can. There was a banana peel and a lot of egg shells. I was on something soft in the pizza box. I was still for awhile, until someone passed the garbage can saying "where did that turkey go?" I gulped softly.

When a couple of minutes passed, I got up and pushed the garbage can over. The sunlight shown on a hat and a worn out stuffed teddy bear inside the pizza box that I was in.

Dialogue
advances
plot.

I ran to my best friend's house. "Hi Broc," I said. "Hi Gobble," said Broc. "Broc, I almost got killed today!" "How?" asked Broc. "This guy came out from behind a tree and shot off three of my feathers!"

Why don't you get a disguise. effective language
A disguise! That's it! Thanks buddy! Got to leave, bye.

I ran back to the garbage can and pulled out the stuffed bear. there was a piece of gum on one of the teddy bear's claws. I pulled off the piece of gum. I pulled out the hat, a banana peel was in it, so I took it out. I zipped the bear open and took all the stuffing out. I then put on the worn out bear suit. I put on the hat, I walked over and got a stick for a cane.

effective
language

Details
continue
to develop
the plot.

Details
show
Gobble's
resourceful-
ness.

I wanted to see if it worked.
 So I walked past a farmer.
 The farmer said "Hi kid, Halloween
 is over!" Then he passed me. I
 laughed with excitement and I was
thrilled.

Details
 develop
 character
 of Gobble.

resolves
 conflict

I ran home and my parents
 did not recognize me. So I showed
 that it was me and I told them
 what happened.

Transition

Then I called Broc. I
 told him what I found and we
 invited Broc and his parents
 to Thanksgiving dinner. We
 were so thankful that the
 farmers didn't get us this
 year.

Connects to
 lead

Correct sentences and usage; some
 errors in punctuation of dialogue;
 no other patterns of errors

NEXT LESSONS:

- using a variety of methods to develop characters
- using strong verbs

Showdown Sam

Title, illustrations,
and lead set up
surprise twist
for reader.



Title captures
essence of
story and
creates reader
interest.

Story is told in
chronological
order.

Topic is narrow
enough to be
developed in
a short story.

Details
develop
Sam's
character.

A long time ago back (when the west was wild), there lived a
mean buckaroo by the name of Showdown Sam. Sam constantly
bragged about how he was the fastest draw on this side of the
Mississippi. He even offered to challenge anyone who doubted his
opinion. But no one did, because he was the best draw on this
side of the Mississippi.

Language
reflects setting.

Lead provides
foreshadowing
of conflict

Varied
Sentences

One day while Sam was sitting at the local saloon drinking a
round of milk he was startled by a large noise from outside. He
walked across the creaky floorboards and through the swinging
saloon doors to the dusty roads that lie in front of the dry building.
There he saw a kid. He couldn't be too old.

Descriptive
language
creates
mood.

He yelled, "Hey kid, what's the name!"



"The name's, Kid, Cody the Kid. I'm looking for an old guy. Sam is his name. He claims to be the quickest draw this side of the Mississippi," replied the kid.

*Dialogue
advances
plot*

With this reply, Sam could feel his anger build, and told him his name. "You're looking at him boy," screamed Sam.

*character
development*

The kid then challenged Sam to a draw that afternoon at the town square. Sam excepted and went off to sharpen his pencil.

*conflict
established*



*clue to reader
that this will not
be a gunfight
as expected*

transition

Later that evening, Sam and Cody met right at the dead center of the town. People were gathered around to witness the event.

Language is appropriate for setting.

"We'll start when the clock strikes six," Sam told Cody.

transition

As soon as the clock struck, dust was all anyone could see for at least five minutes. When the dust cleared, there stood both of the men with their drawings. The crowd was awed by Sam's portrait of a cowgirl on a horse, however, they marveled at Cody's cowboy riding a bull in a rodeo.

Plot twist is revealed.

Illustrations support the plot.



With applause, it was evident that Cody had won the contest. From that day on the west knew a new name, the name of Kid, Cody the Kid, the quickest draw in the west!

resolution of conflict



Sam got on his horse and rode into the sunset, never to be seen again.

few errors in correctness

Conclusion is appropriate for genre of a western.

NEXT LESSONS:

- using details to heighten suspense
- using commas in complex sentences

Story is told in
chronological order.

GRADE 5 - SHORT STORY

title captures essence
of the story.

Overnight In The School

Lead
establishes
conflict.

"I really don't care at all!" replied Ashley Hardy in her snobby sing-songy voice.
"Really I don't!"

character
development

"Well then,.... then, I hate you, you big jerk!" growled Lindsey fiercely.

character
development

Their friends watched in tiresome silence as they threw more crude remarks to each other. Ashley and Lindsey had been fighting now for 5 years, every since they were in Kindergarten. It all started on that first day when there was a battle about a yellow crayon, and now they are 10 years old and still at it. No doubt about it, their friends were getting sick of it!

character
development
underscores
pettiness of
the argument

transition

That day at lunch Lindsey started bragging about staying all night in the school!
"Sure, right, yeah, uh huh!" were only some of the replies she was getting. Just as she was beginning to get incredibly mad... A daresome boy looked up and said, "I DARE YOU!"

character
development

Now Lindsey Jackson was not one to chicken out of a dare, so ever so sinisterly she replied, "I Accept!"

character
development

transition

Of course everything can't always go perfectly in people's plans, and of course like all things, this one didn't go perfect either. What Lindsey didn't know was that her all time opponet, Ashley Hardy was overhearing every word of her conversation. She decided that she would just have to stay too, and make sure that Lindsey stayed, and kept her promise.

Details show
lack of
trust
between
the girls.

establishes
plot

transition

The day seemed to drag along ever so slowly, 3:05 seemed to take days not hours.

Lindsey crouched into her position, little did she know Ashley was very close. They waited until 4:00 for the teachers to file out slowly. The janitors remained until 4:30. The girls found themselves getting impatient, but soon they found themselves, after the very last light switched off, and the very last door closed, alone in the school building.

Details
advance
plot.

strong
verbs

transition

As Lindsey realized what was going on, she jumped up, and let out a big yell,
"Oh, yes!"

- Varied sentence structure throughout
- correct punctuation of dialogue
- few errors in correctness

strong verbs throughout

Ashley yelled, "Just be quiet you little show off!"

"Hey what are you doing here?" asked Lindsey.

"Exactly the question I was going to ask you!" replied Ashley.

"Well, don't think you can come to me whining when you get scared!" Lindsey insisted.

"Well, just don't worry Miss Lindsey! Don't you worry!"

transition Meanwhile, Lindsey ventured into the usual busy but now still hallway. She decided to do something she always wanted to do. She took a deep breath as she approached the boys bathroom.

"I'll just show her," Ashley thought to herself flipping the television to MTV. Hmm! Imagine me getting scared, and running to her. The NERVE!

"How disgusting!" Lindsey thought to herself as she exited the boy's bathroom. It wasn't nearly as exciting as she had planned and it had a horrible odor.

Ashley was beginning to have a horrible headache from listening to Alanis Morissette, a famous rap singer, bang out tunes. About that time, she heard it, a horrible bolt of lightning and thunder. Ashley jumped and apparently Lindsey heard it too. The lights blinked. Oh no, this wasn't suppose to happen. Then the lights went off and stayed out.

transition Ashley remembered seeing flashlights in the Teachers Lounge for emergency use. This was definitely an emergency! She made her way slowly and carefully to the teacher's lounge but her heart was sprinting to get some relief.

Lindsey on the other hand, wandered around the dark school. "Oh!" she thought, "what was that noise? Nothing, right? Of course... why, what could be in this school building this late?"

Ashley didn't know where she was going, but she wished she wasn't there at this moment. She felt something brush against her leg. "Oh!" she shrieked. It was only a fern bush. Wow, what a relief.

Dialogue captures voices of characters and develops the conflict.

Details advance plot.

Continues to contrast the characters

strong
verbs

Lindsey heard the scream, too. She looked behind her and started to tiptoe down the hall. Although she'd never admit, she was scared stiff. Ashley was beginning to get panicky. She looked behind her, and broke into a run. BOOM! The two girls collided into each other going at full speed. "You klutz!" said Lindsey.

character
development

"Well, you're one too!" replied Ashley.

"Ok, Ok, I am starving, I need something to eat!" "Do you know where anything to eat is?" pleaded Lindsey.

"Well, even if I did why would I tell you?" boasted Ashley.

"Please, pretty please." begged Lindsey.

"Okay, in the Teachers Lounge!" confessed Ashley.

They raced to the Teachers Lounge. Lindsey got there just before Ashley did, and

Dialogue
captures
the conflict.

made her way to the refrigerator to find that it was totally empty except a bologna sandwich, a pack of ketchup, and the remainders of a Slim Fast.

Details add
to believability
of story.

"Uh, I'm going to barf!" hollered Ashley.

"Really, there is nothing in the refrigerator!" yelled Lindsey.

"Ditto for the cabinets!" replied Ashley.

"Great, all we have is old bologna, old tuna fish and crackers, a pack of ketchup, and the remainders of a Slim Fast."

"Our special for tonight is, very old bologna, and tuna fish with stale crackers on the side." mimicked Ashley.

"Check please!" ordered Lindsey.

Transition Just as the girls were beginning to enjoy themselves, they heard something.

CREAKkkkk!

"What was that?" questioned Ashley.

"It was just the wind or something, right?" replied Lindsey.

CREAKkkkk! BOOMmmm!

"That, that wasn't the wind" Ashley said getting hoarse.

The "shared
hunger"
experience
begins to
draw the
girls
together,
setting up
the next
scene.

figurative
language

strong verbs

"Uh, Uh!" assured Lindsey.

CREAKkkk! BOOMmmm! BANGggg!

Transition "Run!" screamed Ashley.

They ran to the front door, and stared out into the dark and creepy schoolyard.

There in the moonlight appeared a figure. The moon reflected behind the creature so only the shape could be seen.

descriptive language

"Is it a burglar?" Lindsey thought to herself.

"Could it be Freddy Crooger?" Ashley thought remembering the gruesome movie

"Nightmare On Elm Street." Ashley shivered and hoped it wasn't.

Details enhance mood.

The creature was carrying a cane, and wearing a ragged trench coat. Smoke came from its lips, and it had only one big red eye. Ashley was sure she saw a piece of it fall to the ground.

"OOooh!" she shuddered her spine tickling from fright.

Details develop plot.

The girls slowly backed away from the door, then turned and sprinted to the girls bathroom. They stopped to catch their breath.

BOOMmmm! BANGggg! CRASHhhh! CLANKkkk! CREAKkkk!

"Wh-What was that?" questioned Ashley.

"I don't know, but it's getting closer!" Lindsey replied.

"Eek!" shrieked Ashley.

The outside door to the bathroom creaked.

"Yipes!" yelled Lindsey.

There at their own feet stood the... The Janitor??

"Hey, what are you doing in here?" he asked.

"Um, er, well, we, uh, kinda, sorta, had, well, you know a problem that, we, kind of"

stuttered Ashley.

effective dialogue

"Well, spit it out, you little brats, you're wasting my time, I came to check the back door,

strong
verbs

and here you are!" the janitor snapped.

"We were planning on staying all night in the school!" Lindsey said much cooler than she really felt.

"We're really sorry, and we'll leave right now if you want us to," apologized Ashley.

"Really we will!" put in Lindsey.

"Nope, nobody's going anywhere until I get some names!" the Janitor insisted.

"Oh, our names are..." led on Ashley.

transition And at that moment Lindsey had a great idea. "We, err...." she stuttered coming closer to the open door. As she grabbed Ashley's hand, they dunked between the janitor's legs.

"Hey, get back here!" he commanded.

"Ha, Ha, you'll never get our names now!" Lindsey yelled.

transition On the way home Lindsey broke the silence by saying, "You know Ashley that was really great, about you knowing where the flashlights and food was."

*unity -
recalls
earlier
scene*

*Dialogue
resolves
conflict.*

"Not even half as good as when you had the idea of escaping through the janitor's legs!" Ashley insisted.

"Well, I suppose we both did pretty well," Lindsey replied.

"Friends?" Ashley proposed.

"Friends!" answered Lindsey.

"Hey, it's too bad we really didn't get to stay all night in the school!" Ashley said.

"Don't worry about it; I'm planning on hitting the library next!"

Ashley felt stunned whoa! "Look up," she called. The sun had risen.

"Bye Ashley!"

"Bye!" Lindsey called back.

transition Ashley walked in her house, "How was Monica's?" Ashley's mother called.

"Great!" she stuttered.

*Very effective
conclusion* "I called!" her Mother said. Ashley's eyes went wide.....

*typical of a mother's
character*

*Surprise twist at
end adds to
believability of
story; end
answers reader's
question about
how the girls
accounted to
their parents
about staying out
all night.*

NEXT LESSONS:

- deleting unnecessary dialogue
- using a variety of ways to create a title

Plot is limited enough to be fully developed in a short story. GRADE 6 - SHORT STORY

Story is told in chronological order.

THE HAUNTED CHRISTMAS TREE

Title captures essence of the story and creates reader interest.

Setting details create mood.

It was a cold blustery night, every child on Side-street was supposed to be in bed. Most were asleep dreaming of the toys that would await them in the morning. In the Keeps house hold 7 year-old Mary and 4 year-old Sara Keeps are wide awake when everyone else is asleep (or so they thought).

foreshadowing

uses dialogue to develop characters

"Mary, button my nightgown," Sara asked frustrated.

"Sara you've ripped the top button. Wait here, I'm going to get a safety pin to close the hole," Mary answered, gently chuckling as she walked down the hall to the bathroom.

Sara sat down on the edge of her bed, grabbed her pillow, and snuggled her face into the soft, flannel pillow case and surprisingly went to sleep.

Transition When Mary returned she noticed that Sara had fallen asleep.

Action develops character of Mary as protector.

She gently laid Sara down, tucked her in tight, and softly kissed her forehead. Mary walked over to her bed on the other side of the room and laid down. She turned off the lamp on her night stand beside her bed and then realized that the lamp on her sisters little pink painted night stand was burning dimly. Mary got up once more, went over to Sara's bed and turned the carrousel lamp off. A

Transition few hours later...

"Mary," Sara said, "Mary did you hear that."

"Hear what," replied Mary.

"That noise it sounded like it came from the living room. I hope the Christmas tree is still there," said Sara in a scared voice.

Dialogue establishes the conflict to be resolved in the story.

"Don't worry, at least it was when I went to the bathroom about 10 minutes ago. Besides it's so big you would have to take it down to get it out the door," Mary reassured Sara.

descriptive language and strong verbs

"Maybe you heard Santa, let's go to sleep fast. If he knows we are awake he might take our presents back," Mary used as an excuse to get Sara to go to sleep.

Without a word Sara ran to her bed and laid down and went to sleep with a smile on her face. Mary walked over to her bed and laid down too, but did not go to sleep. She laid on her side facing Sara and tried her best to listen for any unusual noises before she drifted off to sleep herself. *(Details develop characters.)*

Transition Later that night, Sara was awakened again by the same noise she had heard earlier.

Dialogue advances plot and builds suspense "Mary, wake up, Mary," Sara said in a quiet yet threatening voice. "Are you awake!, Did you hear it!, Are you awake!"

"I am now," replied Mary in a harsh but quiet tone, as she tried to get her eyes open.

"You don't sound like you are," Sara said giving her a I-don't-think-so look. *(descriptive language and strong verbs throughout)*

"I am, okay. Now what do you want," Mary demanded.

"I heard that noise again, please go look. I'll go with you if you will, please," Sara pleaded.

"Okay, if you'll quit bothering me, I'll go. Get a flashlight." Mary said.

"Got it, let's go," said Sara excitedly

Slowly, they crept through the hall, trying to be as quite as possible so they wouldn't wake momma and poppa. They could see the angel on top of the Christmas tree from the hallway. The angel glowed in the darkness. It was holding a candle and had wings that moved as if it was flying. Ribbons were flowing down her dress like the small pink streamers at Sara's birthday party, but smaller. Mary and Sara could see more and more of the Christmas tree as they tiptoed slowly toward the living room.

Quietly Mary tugged at Sara's nightgown and started to whisper to her, but before she could say anything the tree started shaking. The ornaments were swinging back and forth and some fell to the floor and rolled by their feet. The floor rattled and shook *(Specific details develop plot.)*

as the ornaments bounced tragically off the floor. The girls stood there with their mouths open and couldn't make a sound they were so scared. All at once Sara made a dash back toward the bedroom and Mary followed on her heels.

Details
build
suspense.

When they reached their room and had the door locked, Mary said. "What in the world is going on."

Sara replied breathlessly, "I don't know but I'm not going back out there, Christmas or not."

Sara ran to her bed and buried herself under the covers. Mary stood by the locked door trying to figure out what could have happened. She wondered if she should wake momma and poppa but was afraid she would get in trouble for being up herself.

Transition

After awhile she decided she would wait and see if anything else happened. Meanwhile Mary noticed Sara had fallen back asleep with her face red from where she had cried. Mary walked over to the dresser and grabbed a tissue from the candy cane decorated tissue box and wiped Sara's face. Then she sat on the end of her bed with her head in her hands listening. For what, she wasn't sure. Different things ran through her mind. Could it have been Santa, an earthquake or had someone broken into the house and stolen all the presents? The only way she would know was if she went back out there.

conveys
character's
thoughts

Varied
lengths
and
structures
of sentences
help
to build
suspense.

Mary decided that's what she would do, without Sara this time. She was a scardy cat anyway and would not be much help except for getting them both in trouble for waking momma. Very quietly Mary unlocked the bedroom door and listened. When she didn't hear anything she slowly started down the hallway toward the living room again. So far everything was still and quiet. The angel on the tree glistened in the moonlight but was still. The Christmas tree was just like it was supposed to be, sparkling and shining and all the presents were piled underneath. Mary stood thinking and quickly decided she would hide in the living room closet for awhile and see if anything happened. She slowly made her way to the closet, opened the door, slipped in and closed the

Details
and
language
continue
to build
suspense.

Varied
lengths
and
structures
of sentences
help to
build
suspense

door quietly behind her. It sure was dark. Mary almost decided it wasn't a good idea after all but since she was there she might as well wait awhile. She tried to get comfortable among the coats and clutter in the closet.

All of sudden she heard noises again. Mary peeped through the door, got scared and closed it again. Mary had to settle herself down so she wouldn't run out screaming. After awhile she got enough courage to peep through the door again. The tree shook and rustled noisily but not as much as before. She slowly inched out of the closet, looked around and made her way to the tree. She saw a dark shadow between the lower branches of the tree as it slowly moved upward. By now she was more curious than scared. Mary quietly made her way to the tree and peered into the branches but before she could see what was there, she heard a cry from the bedroom. Sara awoke and called her name. Paying no attention to her, Mary took a deep breath for courage and parted the branches of the tree.

Details
and
language
continue
to build
suspense.

resolves
conflict
through
dialogue

Two bright green eyes peered back at Mary.

"Chowder, is that you?" Mary said.

"All this time it's been you that's made the tree shake and the ornaments fall off." Mary said relieved.

She picked up Chowder and took her into the bedroom.

"Look Sara, here is our ghost of Christmas."

"Chowder," Sara cried.

It was only the family cat. Chowder was about a year old and full of mischief. She was light brown in color and not really a very pretty cat but we loved her just the same.

"That was you all this time." Sara took Chowder into her arms and kissed her on the top of her head. She took Chowder to her bed and sat her down. Mary sat down on the end of the bed. Chowder walked over to her and curled up on Mary's lap and went to sleep. Even though it was 7 am Sara laid down in her soft sheets and soundlessly went to sleep. Mary gently pushed Chowder off her lap and onto the end of the bed. Chowder didn't

pay any attention to the change, but went to sleep as if she was still in Mary's lap. Mary walked over to her bed laid down and drifted off to sleep once more.

Conclusion connects to the beginning: Mary, Sara, and Chowder are awake when everyone else is asleep.

NEXT LESSON:

- experimenting with flashback, foreshadowing, beginning the story in the middle of the action, and other alternatives to chronological order

GRADE 7 - SHORT STORY

Plot is limited enough to be fully developed in a short story

"Revenge"

It captures essence of the story and creates reader interest.

Ideas and details are placed in chronological order.

"Hey, Rusty," called Jacob Salsbury, the biggest bully in town, from across the street.

Details develop character.

"Yeah?" answered Rusty as he exited the candy shop.

"Go check out your bike. See how you like it."

"What did you do to it, Jacob?"

Dialogue establishes conflict.

"Oh, I just made a few adjustments. I know you'll like it."

Ha-ha-ha!"

descriptive language

Rusty sprinted behind the candy shop where he had left his bike. he was devastated at what he saw. Jacob had slashed the tires so that they were now flat. On top of that he had turned the seat around backwards and taken the chain off. "Oh man! My parents are going to be furious."

Specific details develop plot.

The sad thing was that Rusty was completely defenseless, at least physically. Rusty was a genuine nerd. His moppy brown hair flopped into his eyes as he walked home, which was more than a mile away. Everyone who was not Rusty's friend picked on him, especially Jacob Salsbury.

Details develop character.

At the time, Rusty was not thinking about this. He had his mind focused on how to gain revenge on Jacob.

sets up plot (focused purpose)

descriptive language

"Rusty, where on earth have you been?" questioned Mrs. Felps, his mom, as he trudged into the kitchen.

"Walking home."

"But I thought you rode your bike...."

"Yeah, I did, but Jacob slashed my tires."

"He did what?" she yelled.

Dialogue advances plot.

correct punctuation of dialogue

Transition "He also turned the seat around and took the chain off"
When Rusty told her this, she grabbed him by the arm and went out to the garage. He showed her the damage and she was outraged.

"I gotta get Jacob back somehow," said Rusty quietly as he walked upstairs to his room. He sat down at his desk and began playing Alien Invader III, his new video game. After about two hours, Mr. Felps came up and made Rusty get in bed. He could not fall asleep, so he just lay there looking at his glow-in-the-dark map of the universe brainstorming ways to get Jacob back. He was going to get him good, really good. While sleeping, Rusty came up with a plan that would make Jacob miserable.

stays focused
on purpose
of story
Details
develop
character.

Transition The next morning, Rusty took a shower and got ready for school. He stuffed a tube of superglue into his pocket as he walked out the door. He left earlier than usual to make sure that Jacob would not be there when he arrived.

foreshadowing

specific
detail

"Hi, Mr. Slack," said Rusty cheerfully as he passed the principal in the hall. There were very few other students around, which was to his advantage. Rusty walked straight to Mrs. Turner's class and she was not there, so he had the room all to himself. He found the desk where Jacob sat and pulled out the chair. Then, he smeared superglue all over his seat. It was clear, and hardly noticeable. After doing this, Rusty went and sat down at his own desk.

Details
develop
plot.

Jacob was the last person to enter the room. When he did, Rusty started sweating and his glasses slid down his nose. Rusty

The writer
doesn't
reveal
pivotal detail
until
necessary
for reader.

Details
develop
character.

was relieved when Jacob sat down, not noticing the glue. The bell rang a few moments later and class was in session.

"Class, the first thing we are going to do today is grammar, so get out your grammar books," said Mrs. Turner, "Yes, Jacob, what is it?"

"Umm... I left my grammar book in my locker. May I go and get it?"

"Yes, but hurry back. Next time, bring it with you, okay?"

Jacob tried to get out of his seat, but he couldn't. His rear end was stuck. "Mrs. Turner," he pleaded, "I can't get up. I'm stuck."

"Oh stop being silly, of course you can."

"But..."

"Jacob if you do not want to receive a zero for today's daily grade, I suggest that you get out of your seat and go to your locker."

"I can't get up. Come over here and have a look for yourself."

Sure enough, Mrs. Turner saw that Jacob was superglued to his chair. By this time, a few of the students were giggling. "Well, I suppose you will have to take your pants off in order to get loose," said Mrs. Turner.

"What?" exclaimed Jacob.

"I don't know anything else that we can do. If you do, I'd be happy to let you try it."

Unwillingly, Jacob did as he was told. The class broke out into a roar of laughter, especially Rusty. Jacob turned as red as a strawberry. He ran to the office in his boxer shorts and called his mom to come pick him up.

Rusty was very pleased with himself. Rather than using strength, Rusty relied on his brain to gain revenge on Jacob. He had a feeling that Jacob would not be bothering him anymore.

NEXT LESSON:

- experimenting with alternative methods of concluding a story

Dialogue
advances
plot.

Dialogue
is consistent
with
characters.

effective
language

sensory
detail

sensory
detail

Ends by
resolving
conflict

GRADE 8 - SHORT STORY

The Marker Paper Committee read many short stories written by eighth graders. Although many of these stories demonstrated proficient writing skills at the eighth grade level, none is included here for one or more of the following reasons:

- The story dealt with subject matter that was not appropriate for a statewide marker paper.
- The story was too long to make it a useful diagnostic tool for teachers.
- The story demonstrated skills at a higher level than should be expected for grade 8 students.

The Marker Paper Committee will continue to read grade 8 short stories to select an appropriate marker. If you would like to submit a short story written by a grade 8 student for the committee's consideration, please send the story to:

Cherry Boyles
KDE Marker Paper Project
1812 Capital Plaza Tower
500 Mero Street
Frankfort, KY 40601

POEM

GRADES 4 - 8

The writer of a proficient poem demonstrates most or all of the following skills:

AUDIENCE/PURPOSE

- meets the reader's needs and expectations by adhering to the conventions of poetry
- focuses on the purpose (e.g., paint a picture, re-create a feeling, tell a story, capture a moment, evoke an image, show an extraordinary perception of the ordinary)
- narrows topic
- uses an individual voice
- creates a title which captures the essence of the piece and creates reader interest

IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT

- uses sensory details
- uses poetic devices (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification, imagery)
- creates a mood
- does not sacrifice meaning for rhyme

ORGANIZATION

- maintains coherence and unity
- arranges the poem using white space, line breaks, and shape to enhance meaning

SENTENCES

- uses line breaks effectively
- employs rhythm, melody, and perhaps rhyme

LANGUAGE

- makes language choices based on economy, precision, richness, surprise, impact on the reader
- uses descriptive language
- uses strong verbs and precise nouns
- uses figurative language

CORRECTNESS

- spells correctly
- uses correct end punctuation, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes
- capitalizes correctly
- departs legitimately from standard correctness to enhance the meaning of the poem

As students move from grade to grade, they demonstrate growth in the control and complexity with which they use these skills.

GRADE 4 - POEM

employs rhythm effectively
arranged in stanzas and
organized by
different senses

If I Were A Tree

*title captures
essence of poem.*

focuses on creating
sensory images
experienced by a
tree; narrows topic

If I were a tree I would hear

Birds in their nests up high

*strong
verb*

Wind blowing through my leaves

Squirrels eating nuts inside me. CRUNCH! *descriptive
language*

*repetition
emphasizes
focus*

If I were a tree I would smell

Flowers beneath my trunk

*Details create
sensory image.*

*descriptive
language* A stinky skunk wondering around me,
about to spray

The gun powder from men hunting around
me

*makes language choices
based on description
and economy*

If I were a tree I would feel

Rain falling through my leaves

*strong
verb*

Drilling from a woodpecker

Acorns falling from my limbs

*Details create
sensory image.*

If I were a tree I would see

Boys climbing up my trunk laughing as
they went

*strong
verbs*

Bugs crawling inside me, eating away at
me

*Details create
sensory image.*

New born birds eating worms

If I were a tree I would taste

Berries next to my trunk

*descriptive
language*

Sweet honey inside me

Flower pollen from beneath me

If I were a tree

*Details create
sensory image.*

NEXT LESSON:

- revising lines to follow a pattern (noun + ing-word. . .)

GRADE 4 - POEM

I Am a Big Sister.

Little captures essence of the poem: to recreate her feelings of being a big sister.

Sensory details

Strong verb

I am going to be a big sister.

I am curious if it's a boy or girl.

I am worried if it's alright.

I dream about holding it in my arms.

I am going to be a big sister.

Specific details
support main idea.

I am a big sister.

I found out it's a boy!

I love him and care for him.

I can't wait to see him in his baby bed.

I am a big sister.

precise pronouns

Specific details
support main idea.

Strong Verbs

I hold him at the hospital.

I look at him through the window.

I imagine him at home.

I wonder about him.

I am a big sister.

Specific details
support main idea

Strong Verbs

I hug my mom when she's sad.

I wash her tears away.

I think about him deep down inside.

I pray for him each night.

I am a big sister.

Specific details
support main idea

Repetition of last line of stanzas underscores purpose.

Repetition of "I + verb" creates rhythm.

- uses individual voice
- coherent, unified
- effectively organized by stanzas
- logical line breaks
- language choices based on economy and reader impact
- spells correctly

NEXT LESSON:

- experimenting with poetry that is not based on a formula

GRADE 5 - POEM

*sets
mood
and
tone*

Twass the night before the test
And all through the school,
Everyone was so nervice
No one was cool.

They knew it was coming
They had to prepare,
So they took home thier books
And studied with care.

While the students were studing
Upstairs in thier rooms,
They were looking for answers
To avoid sure doom.

specific language

With thier lights turned on
And thier books open wide,
They studied thier notes
Then set them aside.

You see it's hard to study
When you're in a bad mood,
So they went to the kitchen
To gather some food.

strong verb

There was no food in sight
Not a bite anywhere,
The "fridge" was all empty
And the kitchen was bare.

*descriptive
language*

Then they looked at the wall
And saw a painting of Mona Lisa,
Then they picked up the phone
And ordered some pizza.

They ordered a large

- successful parody
- focuses on telling a story
- maintains unity
- rhyme and rhythm are generally driven by meaning
- poem is logically organized into stanzas
- uses individual voice

Then went back to work,
They studied thier notes
Then turned with a jerk.

continues parody

The phone begain ringing
Thier pizza was on it's way,
With the driver in a car
And not in a sliegh.

continues parody

When what to thier wondering
Eyes should appear,
But a VoltsWagon Beetle
Filled with good cheer.

continues parody

With a fat little driver
Thats not very quick,
They knew in a moment
It was Domino Mick.

continues parody

He gave them thier pizza
They tried not to wait,
But the pizza was cold
And it was getting late.

strong verb They were starting to panic *descriptive language connects to purpose*
They were pacing the hall,
They needed some help
Oh! who could they call?

"Call Susan, call Kendra
call Katie and Sara,
call Richard, call Andy,
call Peter and Clara.

continues parody

They needed some help
They're at wits end,

descriptive language connects to purpose

They need someone
On whom they can depend.

As with any subject
You want to do your best,
You study real hard
So you can ace the test.

*reinforces tone
and mood*

So back to the phone
To make one last call,
They weren't giving up
They were giving their all.

It was getting late
So who could they ask,
To help them complete
This important task.

They put thier heads together
And came up with a plan,
They'd make themselves a quiz
Then answer the best they can.

From thier notes and thier books
They made up a test,
Each taking turns to answer
To see who was the best.

From pullies to magnets
From rockets to rocks,
The questions got harder
With each tick of the clock.

specific details

But each question helped them
In every best way,
For the test that was before them

On the upcoming day.

It was getting late

So they jumped in thier beds, *strong verb*

While all of the answers

Were fresh in thier heads. *descriptive language*

When they got up the next morning

And packed up thier stuff, *strong verb*

They knew alot of answers

But was it enough? *reinforces tone and mood*

They arrived at school

And sat at thier desks,

They sharpened thier pencils *strong verb*

Now bring on the test!

The teacher walked in

And scurried around, *strong verb*

She looked for the test

But they were not to be found.

So she looked at the students

And cracked a big smile, *strong verb*

Merry Christmas to all *continues parody*

Now lets party awhile.

NEXT LESSONS:

- building on use of precise and descriptive language
- creating a title
- using spellcheck

GRADE 5 - POEM

*Title captures
essence of poem
and contributes
to the picture.*

TREE

TREES WILL STAND, QUIET
AND STILL, AND YOU CAN WATCH
THEM FROM YOUR WINDOW SILL. SQUIRRLS
WILL SCAMPER ON THEIR LIMBS, THEIR TAILS
ALL BUSHY, NEVER TRIMMED. AND IF YOU
LOOK, IN THE RIGHT PLACES, YOU
WILL FIND INSECTS IN
SECRET SPACES.
TREES ARE THE
SOURCE OF ENDLESS
WONDER, FROM NUTS
AND FRUITS TO MOUNTAINS
OF COLOR. AND JUST A REMINDER
BETWEEN YOU AND ME, IT NEVER HURTS
TO PLANT A TREE.

*descriptive
language*

← *space
emphasizes
purpose.*

- adheres to conventions of poetry
- focuses on creating a visual image while showing characteristics of a tree
- Shape enhances meaning (concrete poetry).
- maintains rhythm and rhyme
- does not generally sacrifice meaning for rhyme
- narrows topic

NEXT LESSON:

- planning line breaks to enhance meaning while still maintaining concrete shape of poem

GRADE 5 - POEM

Rain

Dark Clouds begin to crawl across the sky.
Then suddenly I hear a strange sound.

personification

Pitter, Patter

Pitter, Patter

onomatopoeia

little
drops
of
water
fall

It is raining!

Each drop talks as it
Hits

personification

The
Ground.

Pitter, Patter

Pitter, Patter

The thunder answers with an angry **BOOM!**

personification
onomatopoeia

A streak of light flies across the sky.

sensory details

The rain comes

down harder.

Then there is silence.

The rain stops.

descriptive language

The sky turns blue and the sun glistens.

- focuses on capturing a moment
- narrows topic
- creates a mood
- Uses line breaks, white space, and change in font to enhance meaning.

NEXT LESSON:

- using imagery to show instead of tell (i.e., *hear a strange sound, there is silence*)

GRADE 6 - POEM

Little Old Lady

She sits in the park on a little old bench,

Feeding the robin, bluebird, and finch.

She sits wrapped up all chilly and cold,

descriptive
language

She imagines she has riches, silver, and gold.

She imagines a house warm and snug,

contrast

With lace curtains and a jewel beaded rug.

She imagines a turkey and raspberry, cranberry sauce,

Then she comes back and realizes her lose.

Thinking of all that isn't hers,

connects to
beginning

She remembers what she does have warmth, food, and the birds.

So whenever you wish you had so much more,

Remember the good things and don't be sore.

purpose

- adheres to conventions of poetry
- focuses on creating an image to teach a lesson
- creates a mood
- generally maintains rhythm
- coherent, unified

NEXT LESSONS:

- creating an effective conclusion without sacrificing meaning for rhyme
- organizing into stanzas with line breaks to reflect rhyme scheme

GRADE 6 - POEM

THE PEN LOST ITSELF

title captures
essence of the poem.

Repetition
reveals the
importance
of the pen
and sets
up Mom's
reaction.

Hey, Mom!

You know that pen,

That you really loved,

That you got as a going away present,

That you used all the time,

That had your name on it?

You know, the one that I borrowed.

- focuses on showing an extraordinary perception of the ordinary
- economy of language
- individual voice
- organized logically
- effective line breaks
- unified

Well that pen,

Kind of lost me.

I didn't lose it,

It lost me!

How could it do that?

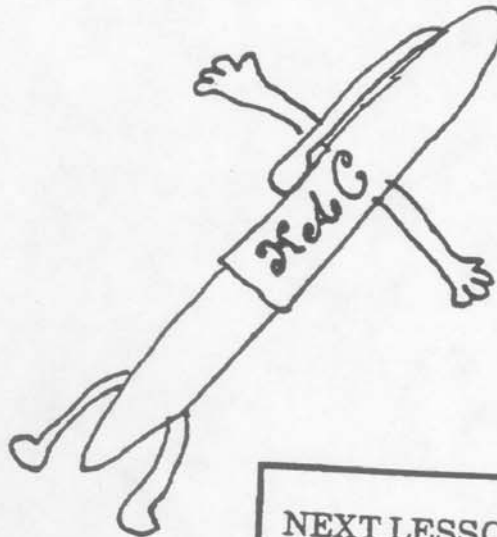
language surprises the reader

personification

"JANE DOE!!!!!"

Good bye!

Last line describes poet's
reaction to Mom in one word.



NEXT LESSON:

- creating a title that preserves mystery

GRADE 7 - POEM

- follows conventions of a poem

Adam, My Brother, My Friend

Use of participles gives reader a sense of immediacy and movement.

Details recreate writer's feelings for the reader.

Opening up the cedar chest
where our family treasures are held,
my eyes lay upon some of the memories
we shared together.

precise noun
imagery

logical organization - I pull out the first box and I see your baby blanket wrapped in tissue:

details

effective line breaks

creates a mood

soft as cotton, smiles
blue like a spring sky,
and the scent of cedar. alliteration

I pick it up and a slight shiver comes over me. alliteration

The next box I discovered held

the Christening Outfit

precise noun - Capitalization
underscores significance of the outfit.

that each of us wore for our Baptism:
a soft, pale yellow gown with
a white, satin ribbon to tie at the feet,
and a beautiful, matching blanket.

details

I hold it close to my heart where all of my memories are stored. imagery (like the cedar chest)

strong verb I suddenly ponder about the wonderful, fun times we had together.

creates mood

However, a solemn sadness surrounds me. alliteration, personification

Picking up your baby book, I open it and see your pictures taped inside.

somewhat consistent use of present tense verbs for action related to chest and past tense verbs for action related to the memories

One picture captured you sitting in your pumpkin seat.

strong verb

Warm droplets of tears course down my face.

strong verb

Remembering how we once danced to the music of the movie "Rocky II,"

alliteration

I speak to myself, "I love you, Adam."

I tenderly remove a picture showing your bright, golden smile as you sat in your Big Wheel, giving the camera a "thumbs up."

effective language

I wish you were still alive!

Tears race down my face while I speak under my breath,

strong verb

"Why did you have to die?"

Why did you have to leave us?

repetition for emphasis

Adam, you were my brother and my friend!

I love you!"

no errors in correctness

NEXT LESSONS:

- controlling verb tense
- changing all sentences to phrases to learn another style of poetry

GRADE 8 - POEM

- focuses on painting a picture and capturing a moment

REACH FOR THE STARS

Title captures essence of poem.

The (midnight/sky

(Outlines) his dark (old) limbs

creates a mood

He (reaches) for the stars

as the moonlight (dims)

effective line breaks

personification throughout

and (just out of reach)

they laugh

so it seems

Line lengths help to create the image.

all the same

this (old, old) tree

will (stretch) for the stars

Language choices show precision and economy.

and his (sprawling thin hands)

will (just miss)

the (wink), and the (gleam).

descriptive language

Shows insight into purpose of poem

NEXT LESSON:

- punctuating poetry to enhance effect on reader

This poem was originally published in the *Kentucky English Bulletin*, Spring 1995.

GRADE 8 - POEM

• focuses on the distance between poet and other girl

• illustration helps to achieve purpose for the reader.

"It Ain't Fair" title captures essence of poem and creates reader interest.

She watches from a distance, far back in an alley, creates mood of distance she watches them play.

"No, I want that dolly!" she hears one girl say.

She cries and cries, tries to wash away the pain imagery with salty tears that fall sensory detail like rain.

She looks at their dresses, and then their curled tresses, descriptive language Like little princesses they look, the ones from the story book.

(It ain't fair, it ain't fair!) captures voice of the poet "Why can't I be like them?" she wonders, "I'm just like a little rat,

that wanders 'round the streets, and no one likes looking at. And look at my face, so ugly and dirty, oh what a disgrace.

Torn and ripped are my only clothes, everything about me I just loathe." They don't realize how lucky they are, to them my world seems so far, reinforces distance it doesn't even exist to them.

They don't appreciate what they got captures voice of poet They don't know, They just don't know.

They've got everything, little music boxes, like birds they sing, simile with sweet gentle notes,

and fathers that own really big boats. They go sailing at sea, with the breeze in their face, contrast but see that's not me, I don't go no place.

(It ain't fair, it ain't fair!) captures voice of poet how I wish instead of here, that I was out there. reinforces distance

NEXT LESSONS:

- maintaining rhythm
- selecting precise words; not sacrificing meaning for rhyme

Repetition for emphasis

